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ENGLISH,

PAST AND PRESENT.

LONDON
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ENGLISH,

PAST AND PRESENT.

EIGHT LECTURES

BY

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH, D.D.

ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

SIXTH EDITION, REVISED AND IMPROVED.

BODLEIANA BIBLIOTHECA

London:

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PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

A SERIES of four lectures which I delivered last spring to the pupils of King's College School, London, supplied the foundation to this present volume. These lectures, which I was obliged to prepare in haste, on a brief invitation, and under the pressure of other engagements, being subsequently enlarged and recast, were delivered in the autumn somewhat more nearly in their present shape to the pupils of the Training School, Winchester; with only those alterations, omissions and additions, which the difference in my hearers suggested as necessary or desirable. I have found it convenient to keep the lectures, as regards the persons presumed to be addressed, in that earlier form which I had sketched out at the first; and, inasmuch as it helps much to keep lectures vivid and real that one should have some

well defined audience, if not actually before one, yet before the mind's eye, to suppose myself throughout addressing my first hearers. I have supposed myself, that is, addressing a body of young Englishmen, all with a fair amount of classical knowledge (in my explanations I have sometimes had others with less than theirs in my eye), not wholly unacquainted with modern languages; but not yet with any special designation as to their future work; having only as yet marked out to them the duty in general of living lives worthy of those who have England for their native country, and English for their native tongue. To lead such through a more intimate knowledge of this into a greater love of that, has been a principal aim which I have set before myself throughout.

ITCHENSTOKE: *Feb.* 7, 1855.

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ENGLISH,

PAST AND PRESENT.

LECTURE I.

ENGLISH A COMPOSITE LANGUAGE.

'A VERY slight acquaintance with the history of our own language will teach us that the speech of Chaucer's age is not the speech of Skelton's, that there is a great difference between the language under Elizabeth and that under Charles the First, between that under Charles the First and Charles the Second, between that under Charles the Second and Queen Anne; that considerable changes had taken place between the beginning and the middle of the last century, and that Johnson and Fielding did not write altogether as we do now. For in the course of a nation's progress new ideas are evermore mounting above the horizon, while others are lost sight of and sink below it: others again change their form and aspect: others which seemed united, split into parts. And as it is with ideas, so it is with their symbols, words. New ones are perpetually

coined to meet the demand of an advanced understanding, of new feelings that have sprung out of the decay of old ones, of ideas that have shot forth from the summit of the tree of our knowledge; old words meanwhile fall into disuse and become obsolete; others have their meaning narrowed and defined; synonyms diverge from each other and their property is parted between them; nay, whole classes of words will now and then be thrown overboard, as new feelings or perceptions of analogy gain ground. A history of the language in which all these vicissitudes should be pointed out, in which the introduction of every new word should be noted, so far as it is possible—and much may be done in this way by laborious and diligent and judicious research—in which such words as have become obsolete should be followed down to their final extinction, in which all the most remarkable words should be traced through their successive phases of meaning, and in which moreover the causes and occasions of these changes should be explained, such a work would not only abound in entertainment, but would throw more light on the development of the human mind than all the brainspun systems of metaphysics that ever were written.'

These words are not my own, but the words of a greatly honoured friend and teacher, who, though we behold him now no more, still teaches, and will teach, by the wisdom of his writings, and the nobleness of his life. They are words of Arch-

deacon Hare. I have put them in the forefront of my lectures; anticipating as they do, in the way of masterly sketch, all or nearly all which I shall attempt to accomplish; and indeed drawing out the lines of a great deal more, to which I shall not venture so much as to put my hand. At the same time the subject is one which, even with my partial and imperfect handling, will, I trust, find an answer and an echo in the hearts of all whom I address; which every Englishman will feel of near concern and interest to himself. For, indeed, the love of our own language, what is it in fact, but the love of our country expressing itself in one particular direction? If the noble acts of that nation to which we belong are precious to us, if we feel ourselves made greater by the greatness, summoned to a nobler life by the nobleness of Englishmen, who have already lived and died, and have bequeathed to us a name which must not by us be made less, what exploits of theirs can well be nobler, what can more clearly point out their native land and ours as having fulfilled a glorious past, as being destined for a glorious future, than that they should have acquired for themselves and for those who come after them a clear, a strong, an harmonious, a noble language? For all this bears witness to corresponding merits in those that speak it, to clearness of mental vision, to strength, to harmony, to nobleness in them who have gradually formed and shaped it to be the utterance of their inmost life and being.

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have been at work upon it, moulding and shaping it into the forms which it now wears, bringing it into the conditions under which it now exists.

At the same time various prudential considerations must determine for us how far up we will endeavour to trace the course of its history. There are those who may seek to trace our language to the forests of Germany and Scandinavia, to investigate its relation to all the kindred tongues that were there spoken; again, to follow it up, till it and they are seen descending from an elder stock; nor once to pause, till they have assigned to it its proper place not merely in that smaller group of languages which are immediately round it, but in respect of all the tongues and languages of the earth. I can imagine few studies of a more surpassing interest than this. Others, however, must be content with seeking such insight into their native language as may be within the reach of all who, unable to make this the subject of especial research, possessing neither that vast compass of knowledge, nor that immense apparatus of books, not being at liberty to yield to it that devotion almost of a life which, followed out to the full, it would require, have yet an intelligent interest in their mother tongue, and desire to learn as much of its growth and history and construction as may be fairly within their reach. To such I shall suppose myself to be speaking. I assume no higher ground than this for myself.

I know, indeed, that some, when invited at all to enter upon the past history of the English

language, are inclined to answer—'To what end such studies to us? Why cannot we leave them to a few antiquaries and grammarians? Sufficient to us to know the laws of our present English, to obtain an acquaintance as accurate as we can with the language as we now find it, without concerning ourselves with the phases through which it has previously past.' This may sound plausible enough; and I can quite understand a real lover of his native tongue, who has not bestowed much thought upon the subject, taking up such a position as this. And yet it is one which is wholly untenable. A sufficient reason why we should occupy ourselves with the past of our language is, that the present is only intelligible in the light of the past, often of a very remote past indeed. There are in it anomalies out of number, which the pure logic of grammar is quite incapable of explaining; which nothing but a knowledge of its historic evolutions, and of the disturbing forces which have made themselves felt therein, will ever enable us to understand; not to say that, unless we possess some such knowledge of the past, we cannot ourselves advance a single step in the unfolding of the latent capabilities of the language, without the danger of committing some barbarous violation of its very primary laws.*

* Littré (*Hist. de la Langue Française*, vol. ii. p. 485): Une langue ne peut être conservée dans sa pureté qu'autant qu'elle est étudiée dans son histoire, ramenée à ses sources, appuyée à ses traditions. Aussi l'étude de la vieille langue est un élément

The plan which I have laid down for myself in these lectures will be as follows. In this my first I shall invite you to consider the language as now it is, to decompose some specimens of it, and in this way to prove, of what elements it is compact, and what functions in it these elements severally fulfil. Nor shall I leave this subject without asking you to admire the happy marriage in our tongue of the languages of the north and south, a marriage giving to it advantages which no other of the languages of Europe enjoys. Having thus before us the body which we wish to submit to scrutiny, and having become acquainted, however slightly, with its composition, I shall invite you in my next to consider with me what this actual language might have been, if that event, which more than all other put together has affected and modified the English language, namely the Norman Conquest, had never found place. In the lectures which follow I shall seek to institute from various points of view a comparison between the present language and the past, to point out gains which it has made, losses which it has endured, and generally to call your attention to some of the more important changes through which it has passed, or is at this present passing.

I shall, indeed, everywhere solicit your attention not merely to the changes which have been in time past effected, but to those also which at

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nécessaire, lequel venant à faire défaut, la connaissance du langage moderne est sans profondeur, et le bon usage sans racines.

this very moment are going forward. I shall not account the fact that some are proceeding, so to speak, under our own eyes, a sufficient ground to excuse me from noticing them, but rather an additional reason for so doing. For indeed these changes which we are ourselves helping to bring about, are the very ones which we are most likely to fail in observing. There is so much to hide the nature of them, to veil their operation, that, save by a very few, they will commonly pass wholly unobserved. Loud and sudden revolutions attract and even compel notice; but revolutions silent and gradual, although with issues far vaster in store, run their course, and it is only when their cycle is nearly or quite completed, that men perceive what mighty transforming forces have been at work unnoticed in their very midst.

Thus, in this matter of language, how few aged persons, let them retain the fullest possession of their faculties, are conscious of any serious difference between the spoken language of their early youth, and that of their old age; that words and ways of using words are obsolete now, which were usual then; that many words are current now, which had no existence at that time. And yet it is certain that so it must be. A man may fairly be assumed to remember clearly and well for sixty years back; and it needs less than five of these sixties to bring us to the age of Spenser, and not more than eight to set us in the time of Chaucer and Wiclif. No one, contemplating this whole term, will deny the immensity of the change

within these eight memories. And yet, for all this, we may be tolerably sure that, had it been possible to interrogate a series of eight persons, such as together had filled up this time, intelligent men, but men whose attention had not been especially roused to this subject, each in his turn would have denied that there had been any change worth speaking of, perhaps any change at all, during his lifetime. It is not the less sure, considering the multitude of words which have fallen into oblivion during these four or five hundred years, that there must have been some lives in this chain which saw those words in use at their commencement, and out of use before their close. And so too, of the multitude of words which have sprung up in this period, some, nay, a vast number, must have come into being within the limits of each of these lives.*

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* See on this subject the deeply interesting chapter, the twenty-third, in Sir C. Lyell's *Antiquity of Man*, with the title, *Origin and Development of Languages and Species compared.* I quote a few words: 'Every one may have noticed in his own lifetime the stealing in of some slight alterations of accent, pronunciation, or spelling, or the introduction of some words borrowed from a foreign language to express ideas of which no native term precisely conveyed the import. He may also remember hearing for the first time some cant terms or slang phrases, which have since forced their way into common use, in spite of the efforts of the purists. But he may still contend that "within the range of his experience" his language has continued unchanged, and he may believe in its immutability in spite of minor variations. The real question, however, at issue is, whether there are any limits to this variability. He will find, on further investigation, that new technical terms are coined almost daily, in various arts,

Nor is it hard on a little reflection to perceive how this going and coming have alike been hid from their eyes. In the nature of things, words which go excite little or no notice in their going. They drop out of use little by little, no one noticing the fact. The student, indeed, of a past epoch of our literature finds words to have been freely used in it which are not employed in his own; and these, when all brought into a vocabulary, by no means to be few in number. But it was only one by one that they fell out of sight, and this by steps the most gradual; were first more seldom used, then only by those who affected a somewhat archaic style, and lastly not at all. And as with the outgoers, so in a measure also is it with the incomers. The newness and strangeness of them, even where there is knowledge and observation sufficient to recognize them as novelties, wear off very far sooner than would be supposed. They were but of yesterday, and men presently use them as though they had existed as long as the language itself. It is the same in other domains of the language. Thus it would be curious to know how many have had their attention drawn to the fact that the subjunctive mood

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sciences, professions, and trades, that new names must be found for new inventions; that many of these acquire a metaphorical sense, and then make their way into general circulation, as "stereotyped" for instance, which would have been as meaningless to the men of the seventeenth century as would the new terms and images derived from steamboat and railway travelling to the men of the eighteenth.'

is at this very moment perishing in English. One who now says, 'If he *call*, tell him I am out'—many do say it still, but they are fewer every day—is seeking to detain a mood which the language is determined to get rid of. It has come to see that clearness does not require that there should be any distinction between the indicative and subjunctive moods, and has therefore resolved that there shall be none. But the dropping of the latter, important change as it is, goes on for the most part unobserved even by those who are themselves effecting the change.

With these preliminary remarks I address myself to our special subject of to-day. And first, starting from the recognized fact that the English is not a simple but a composite language, made up of several elements, as are the people who speak it, I would suggest to you the profit to be derived from a resolving of it into its component parts—from taking, that is, some passage of an English author, distributing the words of which it is made up according to the sources whence they are drawn; estimating the relative numbers and proportion which these languages have severally lent us; as well as the character of the words which they have contributed to the common stock of our tongue.

Thus, suppose the English language to be divided into a hundred parts; of these, to make a rough distribution, sixty might be Saxon; thirty Latin (including of course the Latin which has

come to us through the French); five perhaps would be Greek. We should thus have assigned ninety-five parts, leaving the other five to be divided among all the other languages from which we have adopted isolated words. Probably it is too large a residue. And yet these words are not few. Our wide extended colonial empire brings us in contact with half the world; we have picked up words in every quarter; and, the English language possessing a singular power of incorporating foreign elements into itself, we have ended by making many of these our own.

Thus we have a certain number of Hebrew words, mostly, if not entirely, belonging to religious matters, as 'amen,' 'cabala,' 'cherub,' 'ephod,' 'gehenna,' 'hallelujah,' 'hosanna,' 'jubilee,' 'leviathan,' 'manna,' 'Messiah,' 'sabbath,' 'Satan,' 'seraph,' 'shibboleth,' 'talmud.' The Arabic words in our language are more numerous; we have several arithmetical and astronomical terms, as 'aldebaran,' 'algebra,' 'almanach,' 'azimuth,' 'cypher,'* 'nadir,' 'talisman,' 'zenith,' 'zero;' and chemical no less; for the Arabs were the chemists, no less than the astronomers and arithmeticians of the middle ages; as 'alcohol,' 'alembic,' 'alkali,' 'elixir.' Add to these the names of animals, plants, fruits, or articles of merchandize first introduced by them to the notice of Western Europe; as 'amber,' 'antimonium,' 'apricot,'† 'arrack,' 'artichoke,'

* Yet see J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, p. 985.

† See Mahn, *Etymol. Untersuch.* p. 49.

'barragan,' 'bournous,' 'camphor,' 'carmine,' 'coffee,' 'cotton,' 'crimson,' 'Dey,' 'gazelle,' 'giraffe,' 'henna,' 'jar,' 'jasmine,' 'lake' (lacca), 'laudanum,' 'lemon,' 'lime,' 'lute,' 'mattress,' 'mummy,' 'saffron,' 'sherbet,' 'sirup,' 'shrub,' 'sofa,' 'sugar,' 'sumach,' 'talc,' 'tamarind;' and some further terms, 'admiral,' 'alcove,' * 'amulet,' 'arsenal,' 'assassin,' 'barbican,' 'caliph,' 'caffre,' 'carat,' † 'caravan,' 'divan,' 'dragoman,'‡ 'emir,' 'fakir,' 'felucca,' 'firman,' 'hanger,' 'harem,' 'hazard,' 'hegira,' 'houri,' 'Koran,' 'magazine,' 'mamaluke,' 'minaret,' 'monsoon,' 'mosque,' 'mufti,' 'mussulman,' 'nabob,' 'otto,' 'quintal,' 'razzia,' 'sahara,' 'salaam,' 'scheik,' 'simoom,' 'sirocco,' 'sultan,' 'tarif,' 'vizier;' and I believe we shall have nearly completed the list. Of Persian words we have, 'azure,' 'bazaar,' 'bezoar,' 'caravanserai,' 'check,' 'chess,' 'dervish,' 'jackal,' 'lilac,' 'nectarine,' 'orange,' 'pagoda,' 'saraband,' 'scarlet,' 'sepoy,' 'shawl,' 'taffeta,' 'tambour,'

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* See Mahn, p. 156.

† This is the Greek κεράτιον, which, having travelled to the East, has in this shape come back to us, just as δηνάριον has returned in the 'dinar' of the *Arabian Nights*.

‡ The word hardly deserves to be called English, yet in Pope's time it had made some progress towards naturalization. Of a real or pretended polyglottist, who might thus have served as an universal *interpreter*, he says:

'Pity you was not *druggerman* at Babel.'

'Truckman,' or more commonly 'truchman,' familiar to all readers of our early literature, is only another form of this, which probably has come to us through 'turcimanno,' one Italian form of the word.

'turban;' this last appearing in strange forms, 'tolibant' (Puttenham), 'tulipant' (Herbert's *Travels*), 'turribant' (Spenser), 'turbat,' 'turbant,' and at length 'turban;' 'zenana,' 'zemindar.' We have also a few Turkish, such as 'chouse,' 'fez,' 'janisary,' 'odalisque,' 'sash,' 'tulip,' 'xebek.' Of 'civet,' 'mohair,' and 'scimitar' I believe it can only be asserted that they are Eastern. The following are Hindostanee, 'avatar,' 'banian,' 'bungalow,' 'calico,' 'chintz,' 'cowrie,' 'lac,' 'loot,' 'muslin,' 'punch,' 'rupee,' 'toddy.' 'Tea,' or 'tcha,' as it was spelt at first, with 'bohea,' 'hyson,' 'souchong,' is Chinese; so too are 'junk' and 'hong.'

The New World has given us a certain number of words, Indian and other—'anana' (Brazilian), 'cacique' ('cassiqui,' in Raleigh's *Guiana*), 'caiman,' 'calumet,' 'caoutchouc,' 'canoe,' 'catalpa,' 'chocolate,' 'cocoa,' 'condor,' 'guano' (Peruvian), 'hamoc' ('hamaca' in Raleigh), 'hominy,' 'inca,' 'jaguar,' 'jalap,' 'lama,' 'maize' (Haytian), 'mocassin,' 'mohawk,' 'pampas,' 'pemmican,' 'potato' ('batata' in our earlier voyagers), 'raccoon,' 'sachem,' 'samp,' 'savannah' (Haytian), 'squaw,' 'tobacco,' 'tomahawk,' 'tomata' (Mexican), 'wampum,' 'wigwam.' If 'hurricane' was originally obtained from the Caribbean islanders,* it should be included in this list. There are languages, which have bestowed on us some single

* See Washington Irving, *Life and Voyages of Columbus*, b. 8, c. 9.

word, or two perhaps, or three. Thus 'hussar' is Hungarian; 'hetman,' Polish; 'drosky,' 'ukase,' Russian; 'caloyer,' Romaic; 'mammoth,' of some Siberian language; 'taboo,' 'tattoo,' Polynesian; 'caviar,' and 'steppe,' Tartarian; 'bamboo,' 'cassowary,' 'gong,' 'gutta percha,' 'orang-utang,' 'rattan,' 'sago,' 'upas,' are Malay; 'assegai,' 'chimpanzee,' 'fetisch,' 'gnu,' 'kraal,' 'zebra,' belong to different African dialects; but 'fetisch' has reached us through the channel of the Portuguese.

To come nearer home—we have a certain number of Italian words, as 'bagatelle,' 'balcony,' 'baldachin,' 'balustrade,' 'bandit,' 'bravo,' 'broccoli,' 'buffoon,' 'burlesque,' 'bust' (it was 'busto' at first, and therefore from the Italian, not from the French). 'cameo,' 'canto,' 'caricature,' 'carnival,' 'cartoon,' 'casemate,' 'casino,' 'charlatan,' 'concert,' 'conversazione,' 'cupola,' 'dilettante,' 'ditto,' 'doge,' 'domino,' 'fiasco,' 'filagree,' 'fresco,' 'gazette,' 'generalissimo,' 'gondola,' 'gonfalon,' 'grotto' ('grotta' in Bacon), 'gusto,' 'harlequin,' 'imbroglio,' 'inamorato,' 'influenza,' 'lagoon,' 'lava,' 'lazaretto,' 'macaroni,' 'madonna,' 'malaria,' 'manifesto,' 'maraschino,' 'masquerade' ('mascarata' in Hacket), 'motto,' 'nuncio,' 'opera,' 'oratorio,' 'pantaloon,' 'parapet,' 'pedant,' 'pedantry,' 'pianoforte,' 'piaster,' 'piazza,' 'porcelain,' 'portico,' 'protocol,' 'proviso,' 'regatta,' 'rocket,' 'ruffian,' 'scaramouch,' 'sequin,' 'seraglio,' 'serenade,' 'sirocco,' 'sketch,' 'solo,' 'sonnet,' 'stanza,' 'stiletto,' 'stucco,' 'studio,' 'terrace,' 'terracotta,'

'torso,' 'umbrella,' 'vedette,' 'vermicelli,' 'virtuoso,' 'vista,' 'volcano,' 'zany.' 'Becco,' 'cornuto,' 'fantastico,' 'magnifico,' 'impresa' (the armorial device on shields), 'saltimbanco' (= mountebank), all once common enough, are now obsolete. Sylvester has 'farfalla' for butterfly, but this use is peculiar to him. If this is at all a complete collection of our Italian words, the Spanish in the language are nearly as numerous; nor would it be wonderful if they were more; for although our literary relations with Spain have been slight indeed as compared with those which we have maintained with Italy, we have had other points of contact, friendly and hostile, with the former much more real than we have known with the latter. Thus we have from the Spanish 'albino,' 'alligator' ('el lagarto'), 'armada,' 'armadillo,' 'barricade,' 'bastinado,' 'bolero,' 'bravado,' 'buffalo' ('buff' or 'buffle' is the proper English word), 'cambist,' 'camisado,' 'cannibal,' 'caracole,' 'carbonado,' 'cargo,' 'cigar,' 'cochineal,' 'commodore,' 'creole,' 'desperado,' 'don,' 'duenna,' 'eldorado,' 'embargo,' 'fandango,' 'flotilla,' 'gala,' 'grandee,' 'grenade,' 'guerilla,' 'hooker,'* 'indigo,' 'infanta,' 'jennet,' 'junto,' 'maravedi,' 'maroon,'† 'merino,' 'molasses,' 'mos-

* Not in our dictionaries; but a kind of coasting vessel well known to seafaring men, the Spanish 'urca;' thus in Oldys' *Life of Raleigh*: 'Their galleons, galleasses, gallies, *urcas*, and zabras were miserably shattered.'

† A 'maroon' is a negro who has escaped to the woods, and there lives wild. The word is a corruption of 'cimarron,' sig-

quito,' 'mulatto,' 'negro,' 'olio,' 'ombre,' 'palaver,' 'parade,' 'paragon,' 'parasol,' 'parroquet,' 'peccadillo,' 'picaroon,' 'pintado,' 'platina,' 'poncho,' 'punctilio' (for a long time spelt 'puntillo,' in English books), 'quinine,' 'reformado,' 'sarsaparilla,' 'sherry,' 'soda,' 'stampede,' 'stoccado,' 'strappado,' 'tornado,' 'vanilla,' 'verandah.' 'Caprice' too we obtained rather from Spain than Italy; it was written 'capricho' by those who used it first. Other Spanish words, once familiar, are now extinct. 'Punctilio' lives on, but not 'punto,' which is common enough in Bacon. 'Privado,' a prince's favourite, one admitted to his *privacy* (frequent in Jeremy Taylor and Fuller), has disappeared; so too have 'quirpo' (cuerpo), a jacket fitting close to the *body*; 'quellio' (cuello), a ruff or *neck*-collar; and 'matachin,' the title of a sword-dance; all frequent in our early dramatists; and 'flota,' the constant name of the treasure-fleet from the Indies. 'Intermess,' employed by Evelyn, is the Spanish 'entremes,' though not recognized as such in our dictionaries. 'Albatross,' 'gentoo,' 'mandarin,' 'marmalade,' 'moidore,' 'palanquin,' 'yam,' are Portuguese. Many of our sea-terms, as 'sloop,' 'schooner,' 'yacht,' 'dogger,' 'boom,' 'skipper,' 'lubber,' 'tafferel,' 'to luff,' 'to smuggle,' 'skates,' too, and 'stiver' are Dutch. Celtic *things* for the most part we designate by Celtic words; such as 'bard,' 'clan,' 'claymore,' 'fillibeg,'

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nifying wild in Spanish. In our earlier discoverers it still retains its shape (Drake writes it 'symaron'), though not its spelling.

'kilt,' 'pibroch,' 'plaid,' 'reel,' 'slogan.' Nor only such as these, of comparatively recent introduction, but numerous words, how many is yet a very unsettled question, which at a much earlier date found admission into our tongue, are derived from this same quarter.

Now I have no right to assume that any among those to whom I speak are equipped with that knowledge of other tongues, which shall enable them to detect at once the nationality of all or most of the words which they meet—some of these greatly disguised, and having undergone manifold transformations in the process of their adoption among us; but only that you have such helps at command in the shape of dictionaries and the like, and so much diligence in the use of these, as will enable you to trace out their birth and parentage. But possessing this much, I am confident to affirm that few studies will be more fruitful, will suggest more various matter of reflection, will more lead you into the secrets of the English tongue, than an analysis of passages drawn from different authors, such as I have just now proposed. Thus you will take some passage of English verse or prose—say the first ten lines of *Paradise Lost*—or the Lord's Prayer—or the 23rd Psalm; you will distribute the whole body of words which occur in that passage, of course not omitting the smallest, according to their nationalities—writing, it may be, A over every Anglo-Saxon word, L over every Latin, and so on with the others, if you should meet any other in the portion submitted

to examination. When this is done, you will count up the *number* of those which each language contributes; again, you will note the *character* of the words derived from each quarter.

Yet here, before passing further, let me note that in dealing with Latin words it will be well further to mark whether they are directly from it, and such might be marked L^1, or only mediately, and to us directly from the French, which would be L^2, or L at second hand—our English word being not the child, but the child's child, of the Latin. A rule holds generally good, by which you may determine this. If a word be directly from the Latin, it will have undergone little or no modification in its form and shape, save only in the termination. 'Innocentia' will have become 'innocency,' 'natio' 'nation,' 'firmamentum' 'firmament,' but this will be all. On the other hand, if it comes *through* the French, it will have undergone a process of lubrication; its sharply defined Latin outline will in good part have disappeared; thus 'crown' is from 'corona,' but through 'couronne,' and itself a dissyllable, 'coroune,' in our earlier English; 'treasure' is from 'thesaurus,' but through 'trésor;' 'emperor' is the Latin 'imperator,' but it was first 'empereur.' It will often happen that the substantive has thus reached us through the intervention of the French; while we have only felt at a later period our need of the adjective as well, which we have proceeded to borrow direct from the Latin. Thus 'people' is 'populus,' but it was 'peuple'

first, while 'popular' is a direct transfer of a Latin vocable into our English glossary; 'enemy' is 'inimicus,' but it was first softened in the French, and had its Latin physiognomy to a great degree obliterated, while 'inimical' is Latin throughout; 'parish' is 'paroisse,' but 'parochial' is 'parochialis;' 'chapter' is 'chapitre,' but 'capitular' is 'capitularis.'

Sometimes you will find a Latin word to have been twice adopted by us, and now making part of our vocabulary in two shapes; 'doppelgängers' the Germans would call such. There is first the older word, which the French has given us; but which, before it gave, it had fashioned and moulded, clipping, it may be, by a syllable or more, for the French devours letters and syllables; and there is the younger, borrowed immediately from the Latin. Thus 'secure' and 'sure' are both from 'securus,' but one directly, the other through the French; 'fidelity' and 'fealty,' both from 'fidelitas,' but one directly, the other at second hand; 'species' and 'spice,' both from 'species,' spices being properly only *kinds* of aromatic drugs; 'blaspheme' and 'blame,' both from 'blasphemare,'* but 'blame' immediately from 'blâmer.' Add to these 'granary' and 'garner;' 'captain' (capitaneus) and 'chieftain;' 'tradition' and 'treason;' 'abyss' and 'abysm;'

* This particular instance of 'dimorphism' as Latham calls it, 'dittology' as Heyse, recurs in Italian, 'bestemmiare' and 'biasimare;' and in Spanish, 'blasfemar' and 'lastimar.'

'phantasm' and 'phantom;' 'coffin' and 'coffer;' 'regal' and 'royal;' 'legal' and 'loyal;' 'cadence' and 'chance;' 'balsam' and 'balm;' 'hospital' and 'hotel;' 'digit' and 'doit;' 'pagan' and 'paynim;' 'captive' and 'caitiff;' 'persecute' and 'pursue;' 'superficies' and 'surface;' 'faction' and 'fashion;' 'particle' and 'parcel;' 'redemption' and 'ransom;' 'probe' and 'prove;' 'abbreviate' and 'abridge;' 'dormitory' and 'dortoir' or 'dorter' (this last now obsolete, but not uncommon in Jeremy Taylor); 'desiderate' and 'desire;' 'fact' and 'feat;' 'esteem' and 'aim;' 'major' and 'mayor;' 'radius' and 'ray;' 'pauper' and 'poor;' 'potion' and 'poison;' 'ration' and 'reason;' 'oration' and 'orison;' 'penitence' and 'penance;' 'zealous' and 'jealous;' 'respect' and 'respite;' 'fragile' and 'frail;' 'tract,' 'treat,' and 'trait.'* I

* Somewhat different from this, yet itself also curious, is the passing of an Anglo-Saxon word in two different forms into English, and now current in both; thus 'desk' and 'dish,' both the Anglo-Saxon 'disc,' the German 'tisch;' 'beech' and 'book,' both the Anglo-Saxon 'boc,' our first books being *beechen* tablets (see Grimm, *Wörterbuch*, s. vv. 'buch,' 'buche'); 'girdle' and 'kirtle,' the German 'gürtel;' already in Anglo-Saxon a double spelling, 'gyrdel,' 'cyrtel,' had prepared for the double words; so too 'haunch' and 'hinge;' 'shell' and 'scale;' 'skiff' and 'ship;' 'tenth' and 'tithe;' 'shirt' and 'skirt;' 'swallow' and 'swill;' 'wine' and 'vine;' 'why' and 'how;' 'kill' and 'quell;' 'beacon' and 'beckon;' 'flesh' and 'flitch;' 'black' and 'bleak;' 'pond' and 'pound;' 'whit' and 'wight;' 'deck' and 'thatch;' 'deal' and 'dole;' 'weald' and 'wood;' 'dew' and 'thaw;' 'wayward' and 'awkward;' 'dune' and 'down;' 'hood' and 'hat;' 'ghost' and 'gust;' 'evil' and 'ill;' 'mouth' and 'moth;' 'hedge' and 'hay.'

have, in the instancing of these, named always the Latin form before the French; but the reverse I suppose in every instance is the order in which the words were adopted by us; we had 'pursue' before 'persecute,' 'spice' before 'species,' 'royalty' before 'regality,' and so with the others.*

The explanation of this more thorough change which the earlier form has undergone, is not far to seek. Words introduced into a language at a period when as yet writing is rare, and books are few or none, when therefore orthography is unfixed, or being purely phonetic, cannot properly be said to exist at all, have for a long time no other life save that which they live orally on the lips of men. The checks therefore to alterations in the form of a word which a written, and still more which a printed, literature imposes are wanting, and thus we find words out of number altogether reshaped and remoulded by the people who have adopted them, so entirely assimilated to *their* language in form and termination, as in the end to be almost or quite undistinguishable from natives. On the other hand a most effectual check to this process, a process sometimes bar-

* We have double adoptions from the Greek; one direct, one modified in passing through some other language; thus, 'adamant' and 'diamond;' 'monastery' and 'minster;' 'paralysis' and 'palsy;' 'scandal' and 'slander;' 'theriac' and 'treacle;' 'asphodel' and 'daffodil;' 'presbyter' and 'priest;' 'dactyl' and 'date;' the fruit so called deriving its name from its likeness to a 'dactyl' or finger; 'cathedral' and 'chair.' 'Cypher' and 'zero,' I may add, are different adoptions of one and the same Arabic word.

barizing and defacing, however it may be the only one which will make the newly brought in entirely homogeneous with the old and already existing, is imposed by the existence of a much written language and a full-formed literature. The foreign word, being once adopted into these, can no longer undergo a thorough transformation. Generally the utmost which use and familiarity can do with it now, is to cause the gradual dropping of the foreign termination; not that this is unimportant; it often goes far to make a home for a word, and to hinder it from wearing the appearance of a stranger and intruder.*

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* The French itself has also a double adoption, or double formation, from the Latin, and such as quite bears out what has been said above: one popular and reaching back to the earliest times of the language, the other belonging to a later and more literary period, 'demotic' and 'scholastic' they have been severally called; on which subject see Génin, *Récréations Philologiques*, vol. i. pp. 162—166; Littré, *Hist. de la Langue Française*, vol. i. pp. 241—244; Fuchs, *Die Roman. Sprachen*, p. 125; Mahn, *Etymol. Forschung*. pp. 19, 46, and passim. Thus from 'separare' is derived 'sevrer,' to separate the child from its mother's breast, to wean, but also 'séparer,' without this special sense; from 'pastor,' 'pâtre,' a shepherd in the literal, and 'pasteur' the same in a tropical, sense; from 'catena,' 'chaîne' and 'cadène;' from 'fragilis,' 'frêle' and 'fragile;' from 'pensare,' 'peser' and 'penser;' from 'gehenna,' 'gêne' and 'géhenne;' from 'captivus,' 'chétif' and 'captif;' from 'nativus,' 'naïf' and 'natif;' from 'immutabilis,' 'immutable' and 'immuable;' from 'designare,' 'dessiner' and 'désigner;' from 'decimare,' 'dîmer' and 'dècimer;' from 'consumere,' 'consommer' and 'consumer;' from 'simulare,' 'sembler' and 'simuler;' from 'sollicitare,' 'soucier' and 'solliciter;' from 'adamas,' 'adamant' and 'aimant' (lodestone); from the low Latin, 'disjejunare,' 'dîner' and 'déjeûner;' from 'acceptare,' 'acheter' and 'accepter;' from

But to return from this digression. I said just now that you would learn much from making an inventory of the words of one descent and those of another occurring in any passage which you analyse; and noting the proportion which they bear to one another. Thus examine the Lord's Prayer. Of the seventy words whereof it consists only the following six claim the rights of Latin citizenship—'trespasses,' 'trespass,' 'temptation,' 'deliver,' 'power,' 'glory.' Nor would it be very difficult to substitute for any one of these a Saxon word. Thus for 'trespasses' might be substituted 'sins;' for 'deliver' 'free;' for 'power' 'might;' for 'glory' 'brightness;' which would only leave 'temptation,' about which there could be the slightest difficulty; and 'trials,' though now employed in a somewhat different sense, would exactly correspond to it. This is but a small percentage, six words in seventy, or less than ten in the hun-

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'homo,' 'on' and 'homme;' from 'paganus,' 'payen' and 'paysan;' from 'obedientia,' 'obéissance' and 'obédience;' from 'strictus,' 'étroit' and 'strict;' from 'scintilla,' 'étincelle' and 'scintille;' from 'sacramentum,' 'serment' and 'sacrement;' from 'ministerium,' 'métier' and 'ministère;' from 'parabola,' 'parole' and 'parabole;' from 'peregrinus,' 'pélerin' and 'pérégrin;' from 'factio,' 'façon' and 'faction,' and it has now adopted 'factio' in a third shape, that is, in our English 'fashion;' from 'pietas,' 'pitié' and 'piété;' from 'paradisus,' 'paradis' and 'parvis;' from 'capitulum,' 'chapitre' and 'capitule,' a botanical term; from 'causa,' 'chose' and 'cause;' while 'attacher' and 'attaquer' only differ in pronunciation. So, too, in Italian we have 'manco,' maimed, and 'monco,' maimed *of a hand*; 'rifutáre,' to refute, and 'rifiutáre,' to refuse; 'dama' and 'donna,' both forms of 'domina.'

dred; and we often light upon a still smaller proportion. Thus take the first three verses of the 23rd Psalm :—'The Lord is my Shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing; He shall feed me in a green *pasture*, and lead me forth beside the waters of *comfort*; He shall *convert* my soul, and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake.' Here are forty-five words, and only the three in italics are Latin; for each of which it would be easy to substitute one of home growth; little more, that is, than the proportion of seven in the hundred; while in five verses out of Genesis, containing one hundred and thirty words, there are only five not Saxon, less, that is, than four in the hundred; and, more notably still, the first four verses of St. John's Gospel, in all fifty-four words, have no single word that is not Saxon.

Shall we therefore conclude that these are the proportions in which the Anglo-Saxon and Latin elements of the language stand to one another? If they are so, then my former proposal to express their relations by sixty and thirty was greatly at fault; and seventy to twenty, or even eighty to ten, would fall short of adequately representing the real predominance of the Saxon over the Latin element in the language. But it is not so; the Anglo-Saxon words by no means outnumber the Latin in the degree which the analysis of those passages would seem to imply. It is not that there are so many more Anglo-Saxon words, but that the words which there are, being words of more

primary necessity, do therefore so much more frequently recur. The proportions which the analysis of the *dictionary*, that is, of the language *at rest*, would furnish, are very different from those instanced just now, and which the analysis of *sentences*, or of the language *in motion*, gives. Thus if we examine by aid of a Concordance the total vocabulary of the English Bible, not more than sixty per cent of the words are native; but in the actual translation the native words are from ninety per cent in some passages to ninety-six in others.* The proportion in Shakespeare's vocabulary of native words to foreign is much the same as in the English Bible, that is, about sixty to forty; while an analysis of various plays gives a proportion of from eighty-eight to ninety-one per cent among those in actual employment. But Milton gives results more remarkable still. We gather from a Concordance that only thirty-three per cent of the words employed by him in his poetical works are of Anglo-Saxon origin; while an analysis of a book of *Paradise Lost* yields eighty per cent of such, and of *L'Allegro* ninety. Indeed very many of his Latin words are employed by him only once.

The notice of this fact will lead us to some important conclusions as to the *character* of the words which the Saxon and the Latin severally furnish; and principally to this:—that while

* See Marsh, *Manual of the English Language*, Engl. Ed. p. 88, *sqq*.

English is thus compact in the main of these two elements, their contributions are of very different characters and kinds. The Anglo-Saxon is not so much what I have just called it, one element of the English language, as the basis of it. All the joints, the whole *articulation*, the sinews and ligaments, the great body of articles, pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, numerals, auxiliary verbs, all smaller words which serve to knit together and bind the larger into sentences, these, not to speak of the grammatical structure, are exclusively Saxon. The Latin may contribute its tale of bricks, yea, of goodly and polished hewn stones, to the spiritual building; but the mortar, with all which binds the different parts of it together, and constitutes them into a house, is Saxon throughout. Selden in his *Table Talk* uses another comparison; but to the same effect: 'If you look upon the language spoken in the Saxon time, and the language spoken now, you will find the difference to be just as if a man had a cloak which he wore plain in Queen Elizabeth's days, and since, here has put in a piece of red, and there a piece of blue, and here a piece of green, and there a piece of orange-tawny. We borrow words from the French, Italian, Latin, as every pedantic man pleases.' Whewell sets forth the same fact under another image: 'Though our comparison might be bold, it would be just if we were to say that the English language is a conglomerate of Latin words bound together in a Saxon cement; the fragments of the Latin being partly portions

introduced directly from the parent quarry, with all their sharp edges, and partly pebbles of the same material, obscured and shaped by long rolling in a Norman or some other channel.'

This same law holds good in all composite languages; which, composite as they are, yet are only such in regard of their words. There may be a motley company of these, some coming from one quarter, some from another; but there is never a medley of grammatical forms and inflections. One or other language entirely predominates here, and everything has to conform and subordinate itself to the laws of this ruling and ascendant language. The Anglo-Saxon is the ruling language in our present English. This having thought good to drop its genders, the French substantives which come among us, must in like manner leave theirs behind them; so too the verbs must renounce their own conjugations, and adapt themselves to ours.* 'The Latin and the French deranged the vocabulary of our language, but never its form or structure.'† I believe that a remarkable parallel to

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* W. Schlegel (*Indische Bibliothek*, vol. i. p. 284): Coëunt quidem paullatim in novum corpus peregrina vocabula, sed grammatica linguarum, unde petitæ sunt, ratio perit.

† Guest, *Hist. of English Rhythms*, vol. ii. p. 108. 'Languages,' says Max Müller, 'though mixed in their dictionaries, can never be mixed in their grammar. In the English dictionary the student of the science of language can detect by his own tests Celtic, Norman, Greek, and Latin ingredients; but not a single drop of foreign blood has entered into the organic system of the English language. The grammar, the blood and soul of the

this might be found in the language of Persia, since the conquest of that country by the Arabs. The ancient Persian religion fell with the government, but the language remained totally unaffected by the revolution, in its grammatical structure and character. Arabic vocables, the only exotic words found in Persian, are found in numbers varying with the object and quality, style and taste of the writers, but pages of pure idiomatic Persian may be written without employing a single word from the Arabic.

At the same time the secondary or superinduced language, though powerless to force its forms on the language which receives its words, may yet compel that other to renounce a portion of its own forms, by the impossibility which is practically found to exist of making them fit the new comers; and thus it may exert, although not a positive, yet a negative, influence on the grammar of the other tongue. It has proved so with us. 'When the English language was inundated by a vast influx of French words, few, if any, French forms were received into its grammar; but the Saxon forms soon dropped away, because they did not suit the new roots; and the genius of the language, from having to deal with the newly imported words in a rude state, was induced to neglect the inflections of the native ones. This

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language, is as pure and unmixed in English as spoken in the British Isles, as it was when spoken on the shores of the German Ocean by the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes of the continent.'

for instance led to the introduction of the *s* as the universal termination of all plural nouns, which agreed with the usage of the French language, and was not alien from that of the Saxon, but was merely an extension of the termination of the ancient masculine to other classes of nouns.'*

If you wish to have actual proof of the fact just now asserted, namely, that the radical constitution of the language is Saxon, try to compose a sentence, let it be only of ten or a dozen words, and the subject entirely of your own choice, employing therein only words of a Latin derivation. You will find it impossible, or next to impossible, to do this. Whichever way you turn, some obstacle will meet you in the face. On the other side, whole pages might be written, not perhaps on higher or abstruser themes, but on familiar matters of everyday life, in which every word should be of Saxon extraction; and these, pages from which, with the exercise of a little patience and ingenuity, all appearance of awkwardness should be excluded, so that none would guess, unless otherwise informed, that the writer had submitted himself to this restraint and limitation, and was drawing his words from one section only of the English language. Sir Thomas Browne has given several long paragraphs so constructed. Here is a little fragment of one of them: 'The

* J. Grimm, quoted in *The Philological Museum*, vol. i. p. 667.

first and foremost step to all good works is the dread and fear of the Lord of heaven and earth, which through the Holy Ghost enlighteneth the blindness of our sinful hearts to tread the ways of wisdom, and lead our feet into the land of blessing.'* This is not stiffer than the ordinary English of his time.

But because it is thus possible to write English, forgoing altogether the use of the Latin portion of the language, you must not therefore conclude this latter portion of the language to be of little value, or that we should be as rich without it as with it. We should be very far indeed from so being. I urge this, because we hear sometimes regrets expressed that we have not kept our language more free from the admixture of Latin, and suggestions made that we should even now endeavour to restrain our employment of this within the narrowest possible limits. I remember Lord Brougham urging upon the students at Glasgow that they should do their best to rid their diction of long-tailed words in 'osity' and 'ation.' Now, doubtless, there was sufficient ground and warrant for the warning against such which he gave them. Writers of a former age, Samuel Johnson in the last century, Henry More and Sir Thomas Browne in the century preceding, gave beyond all question undue preponderance to the learned, or Latin, portion in our language; and there have never wanted those who have trod in their footsteps;

* *Works*, vol. iv. p. 202.

while yet it is certain that very much of the homely strength and beauty of English, of its most popular and truest idioms, would have perished from it, had they succeeded in persuading the great body of English writers to write as they had written.

But for all this we could *almost* as ill spare this portion of the language as the other. It represents and supplies needs not less real than the other does. Philosophy and science and the arts of a high civilization find their utterance in the Latin words of our language, or, if not in the Latin, in the Greek, which for present purposes may be grouped with them. Granting too that, all other things being equal, when a Latin and a Saxon word offer themselves to our choice, we shall generally do best to employ the Saxon, to speak of 'happiness' rather than 'felicity,' 'almighty' rather than 'omnipotent,' a 'forerunner' rather than a 'precursor,' still these latter are as truly denizens in the language as the former; no alien interlopers, but possessing the rights of citizenship as fully as the most Saxon word of them all. One part of the language is not to be unduly favoured at the expense of the other; the Saxon at the cost of the Latin, as little as the Latin at the cost of the Saxon. 'Both,' as De Quincey, himself a foremost master of English style, has well said, 'are indispensable; and speaking generally without stopping to distinguish as to subject, both are *equally* indispensable. Pathos, in situations which are homely, or at all

connected with domestic affections, naturally moves by Saxon words. Lyrical emotion of every kind, which (to merit the name of *lyrical*) must be in the state of flux and reflux, or, generally, of agitation, also requires the Saxon element of our language. And why? Because the Saxon is the aboriginal element; the basis and not the superstructure: consequently it comprehends all the ideas which are natural to the heart of man and to the elementary situations of life. And although the Latin often furnishes us with duplicates of these ideas, yet the Saxon, or monosyllabic part, has the advantage of precedency in our use and knowledge; for it is the language of the nursery whether for rich or poor, in which great philological academy no toleration is given to words in "osity" or "ation." There is therefore a great advantage, as regards the consecration to our feelings, settled by usage and custom upon the Saxon strands in the mixed yarn of our native tongue. And universally, this may be remarked —that wherever the passion of a poem is of that sort which *uses*, *presumes*, or *postulates* the ideas, without seeking to extend them, Saxon will be the "cocoon" (to speak by the language applied to silk-worms), which the poem spins for itself. But on the other hand, where the motion of the feeling is *by* and *through* the ideas, where (as in religious or meditative poetry—Young's, for instance, or Cowper's), the pathos creeps and kindles underneath the very tissues of the thinking, there the Latin will predominate; and so much so that,

whilst the flesh, the blood, and the muscle, will be often almost exclusively Latin, the articulations only, or hinges of connection, will be Anglo-Saxon.' On this same matter Sir Francis Palgrave has expressed himself thus: 'Upon the languages of Teutonic origin the Latin has exercised great influence, but most energetically on our own. The very early admixture of the *Langue d'Oil*, the never interrupted employment of the French as the language of education, and the nomenclature created by the scientific and literary cultivation of advancing and civilized society, have Romanized our speech; the warp may be Anglo-Saxon, but the woof is Roman as well as the embroidery, and these foreign materials have so entered into the texture, that were they plucked out, the web would be torn to rags, unravelled and destroyed.' *

We shall nowhere find a happier example of the preservation of the golden mean than in our Authorized Version of the Bible. Among the minor and secondary blessings conferred by that Version on the nations drawing their spiritual life from it,—a blessing only small by comparison with the infinitely greater blessings whereof it is the vehicle to them,—is the happy wisdom, the instinctive tact, with which its authors have kept clear in this matter from all exaggeration. There has not been on their parts any futile and mischievous attempt to ignore the full rights of the

* *History of Normandy and England*, vol. i. p. 78.

Latin element of the language on the one side, nor on the other any burdening of the Version with so many learned Latin terms as should cause it to forfeit its homely character, and shut up large portions of it from the understanding of plain and unlearned men. An honourable acknowledgment of the immense superiority in this respect of our English Version over the Romish, has been made by one, now unhappily familiar with the latter, as once he was with ours. The chief among those who have in late years abandoned the communion of the English Church has expressed in deeply touching tones his sense of all, which in renouncing our translation, he feels himself to have foregone and lost. These are his words: 'Who will not say that the uncommon beauty and marvellous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy in this country? It lives on the ear, like a music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells, which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities often seem to be almost things rather than mere words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of national seriousness. . . . . The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. The power of all the griefs and trials of a man is hidden beneath its words. It is the representative of his best moments, and all that there has been about him of soft and gentle and pure and penitent and good speaks to him for

ever out of his English Bible. . . . . It is his sacred thing, which doubt has never dimmed, and controversy never soiled. In the length and breadth of the land there is not a Protestant with one spark of religiousness about him, whose spiritual biography is not in his Saxon Bible.'*

Certainly one has only to compare this Version of ours with the Rhemish, at once to understand why he should have thus given the palm and preference to ours. I urge not here the fact that one translation is from the original Greek, the other from the Latin Vulgate, and thus the translation of a translation, often reproducing the mistakes of that translation; but, putting all such higher advantages aside, only the superiority of the diction in which the meaning, be it correct or incorrect, is conveyed to English readers. Thus I open the Rhemish Version at Galatians v. 19, where the long list of the 'works of the flesh,' and of the 'fruit of the Spirit,' is given. But what could a mere English reader make of terms such as these—'impudicity,' 'ebrieties,' 'comessations,' 'longanimity,' all which occur in that passage? while our Version for 'ebrieties' has 'drunkenness,' for 'comessations' has 'revellings,' for 'longanimity' 'longsuffering.' Or set over against one another such phrases as these,—in the Rhemish, 'the exemplars of the celestials' (Heb. ix. 23), but in ours, 'the patterns of things in the heavens.' Or suppose if, instead of what

* *Dublin Review*, June, 1853.

we read at Heb. xiii. 16, 'To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased,' we read as in the Rhemish, 'Beneficence and communication do not forget; for with such hosts God is promerited'!—Who does not feel that if our Version had been composed in such Latin-English as this, had yielded words like 'odible,' 'suasible,' 'exinanite,' 'contristate,' 'postulations,' 'coinquinations,' 'agnition,' 'zealatour,' 'donary,'—these all, with many more of the same mint, being found in the Rhemish Version,—our loss would have been great and enduring, one which would have been felt through the whole religious life of our people, in the very depths of the national mind?*

There was indeed something deeper than love of sound and genuine English at work in our Translators, whether they were conscious of it or not, which hindered them from presenting the Scriptures to their fellow-countrymen dressed out in such a semi-Latin garb as this. The Reformation, which they were in this translation so effectually setting forward, was just a throwing off, on the part of the Teutonic nations, of that everlasting pupilage in which Rome would fain have held them; an assertion at length that they were come to full age, and that not through her, but directly through Christ, they would address themselves unto God. The use of Latin as the

* There is more on this matter in my book, *On the Authorized Version of the New Testament*, pp. 33—35.

language of worship, as the language in which alone the Scriptures might be read, had been the great badge of servitude, even as the Latin habits of thought and feeling which it promoted had been most important helps to the continuance of this servitude, through long ages. It lay deep then in the essential conditions of the conflict which they were maintaining, that the Reformers should develop the Saxon, or essentially national, element in the language; while it was just as natural that the Roman Catholic translators, if they must render the Scriptures into English at all, should yet render them into such English as should bear the nearest possible resemblance to that Latin Vulgate, which Rome with a wisdom that in such matters has never failed her, would gladly have seen as the only version of the Book in the hands of the faithful.

Let me again, however, recur to the fact that what our Reformers did in this matter, they did without exaggeration; even as they have shown the same wise moderation in still higher matters. They gave to the Latin element of the language its rights, though they would not suffer it to encroach upon and usurp those of the other. It would be difficult not to believe, even if many outward signs did not suggest the same, that there is an important part in the future for that one language of Europe to play, which thus serves as connecting link between the North and the South, between the languages spoken by the Teutonic nations of the North and by the

Romance nations of the South; which holds on to and partakes of both; which is as a middle term between them.* There are who venture to hope that the English Church, having in like manner two aspects, looking on the one side toward Rome, being herself truly Catholic, looking on the other toward the Protestant communions, being herself also protesting and reformed, may have reserved for her in the providence of God an important share in that reconciling of a divided Christendom, whereof we are bound not to despair. And if this ever should be so, if, notwithstanding our sins and unworthiness, so blessed an office should be in store for her, it will be no small assistance to this, that the language in which her mediation will be effected is one wherein both parties may claim their own, in which neither will feel that it is receiving the adjudication of a stranger, of one who must be an alien from its deeper thoughts and habits, because an alien from its words, but a language in which both must recognize very much of that which is deepest and most precious of their own.†

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* See a paper, *On the Probable Future Position of the English Language*, by T. Watts, Esq., in the *Proceedings of the Philological Society*, vol. iv. p. 207; and compare the concluding words in Guest's *Hist. of English Rhythms*, vol. ii. p. 429.

† Fowler (*English Grammar*, p. 135): 'The English is a medium language, and thus adapted to diffusion. In the Gothic family it stands midway between the Teutonic and the Scandinavian branches, touching both, and to some extent reaching into both. A German or a Dane finds much in the English which exists in his own language. It unites by certain bonds of consanguinity, as no other language does, the Romanic with the

Nor is this prerogative which I have just claimed for our English the mere dream and fancy of patriotic vanity. The scholar who in our days is most profoundly acquainted with the great group of the Teutonic languages in Europe, and a devoted lover, if ever there was such, of his native German, I mean Jacob Grimm, has expressed himself very nearly to the same effect, and given the palm over all to our English in words which you will not grudge to hear quoted, and with which I shall bring this lecture to a close. After ascribing to our language 'a veritable power of expression, such as perhaps never stood at the command of any other language of men,' he goes on to say, 'Its highly spiritual genius, and wonderfully happy development and condition, have been the result of a surprisingly intimate union of the two noblest languages in modern Europe, the Teutonic and the Romance.—It is well known in what relation these two stand to one another in the English tongue; the former supplying in far larger proportion the material groundwork, the latter the spiritual conceptions. In truth the English language, which by no mere accident has produced and upborne the greatest and most predominant poet of modern times, as distinguished from the ancient classical poetry (I can, of course, only mean Shakespeare), may with all right be called a

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Gothic languages. 'An Italian or a Frenchman finds a large class of words in the English, which exist in his own language, though the basis of the English is Gothic.'

world-language; and, like the English people, appears destined hereafter to prevail with a sway more extensive even than its present over all the portions of the globe.* For in wealth, good sense, and closeness of structure no other of the languages at this day spoken deserves to be compared with it—not even our German, which is torn, even as we are torn, and must first rid itself of many defects, before it can enter boldly into the lists, as a competitor with the English.' †

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* A little more than two centuries ago a poet, himself abundantly deserving the title of 'well-languaged,' which a contemporary or near successor gave him, ventured in some remarkable lines timidly to anticipate this. Speaking of his native tongue, which he himself wrote with such vigour and purity, though wanting in the passion and the fiery impulses which go to the making of a first-rate poet, Daniel exclaims:

'And who, in time, knows whither we may vent
The treasure of our tongue, to what strange shores
This gain of our best glory shall be sent,
To enrich unknowing nations with our stores?
What worlds in the yet unformèd Occident
May come refined with the accents that are ours?
Or who can tell for what great work in hand
The greatness of our style is now ordained?
What powers it shall bring in, what spirits command,
What thoughts let out, what humours keep restrained,
What mischief it may powerfully withstand,
And what fair ends may thereby be attained?'

† *Ueber den Ursprung der Sprache*, Berlin, 1832, p. 50.

LECTURE II.

ENGLISH AS IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

YOU heard in my former lecture that such as have best right to speak are strong to maintain that English has gained far more than it has lost by that violent interruption of its orderly development which the Norman Conquest brought with it, that it was permanently enriched by that immense irruption and settlement of foreign words within its borders, which followed, though not immediately, on that catastrophe. But the composite character which the language thus assumed suggests to us a very interesting and not uninstructive subject of speculation, namely, what this language would actually now be, if there had been no Battle of Hastings; or a Battle of Hastings which William had lost and Harold won. When I invite you for a little to consider this with me, you will of course understand me to exclude any similar events, which should in the same way have issued in the setting up of an intrusive dynasty, supported by the arms of a foreign soldiery, and speaking a Romanic as distinguished from a Gothic language, on the throne of

England. I lay a stress upon this last point—a people speaking a Romanic language; inasmuch as the effects upon the language spoken in England would have been quite different, and far less momentous, reaching far less widely, if the great Canute had succeeded in founding a Danish, or Hardrada a Norwegian, dynasty in England—Danish and Norwegian both being dialects of the same Gothic language which was already spoken here. Some differences in the language which Englishmen now speak such an event, and it was not at one time at all improbable, would have entailed; but slight and inconsiderable by the side of those which have followed the coming in of a conquering and ruling race speaking one of the tongues directly formed upon the Latin.

This which I suggest is only one branch of a far larger speculation. It would be no uninteresting task if one thoroughly versed in the whole constitutional lore of England, acquainted as a Palgrave was with Anglo-Saxon England, able to look into the seeds of things and to discern which of these contained the germs of future development, which would grow and which would not, should interpret to us by the spirit of historic divination, what, if there had been no successful Norman invasion, would be now the social and political institutions of England, what the relations of the different ranks of society to one another, what the division and tenure of land, what amount of liberty at home, of greatness abroad, England would at this day have achieved.

It is only on one branch of this subject that I propose to enter at all. It may indeed appear to some that even in this I am putting before them problems which are in their very nature impossible to solve, which it is therefore unprofitable to entertain; since dealing, as here we must, with what might have been, not with what actually has been or is, all must be mere guesswork for us; and, however ingenious our guesses, we can never test them by the touchstone of actual fact, and so estimate their real worth.

Such an objection would rest on a mistake, though a very natural one. I am persuaded we *can* know to a very large extent how under such conditions as I have supposed, it would have fared with our tongue, what the English would be like, which in such a case the dwellers in this island would be speaking at this day. The laws which preside over the development of language are so fixed and immutable, capricious as they seem, there is really so little caprice in them, that if we can at all trace the course which other kindred dialects have followed under such conditions as English would then have been submitted to, we may thus arrive at very confident conclusions as to the road which English would have travelled. And there *are* such languages; more or less the whole group of Gothic languages are such. Studying any one of these, and the most obvious of these to study would be the German, we may learn very much of the forms which English would now wear, if the tremendous shock of one ever-

memorable day had not changed so much in this land, and made England and English both so different from what otherwise they would have been.

At the same time I would not have you set *too* high the similarity which would have existed between the English and other Gothic languages, even if no such huge catastrophe as that had mixed so many new elements in the one which are altogether foreign to the other. There are *always* forces at work among tribes and people which have parted company, one portion of them, as in this instance, going forth to new seats, while the other tarried in the old; or both of them, as in the case of those whom we know as Greeks and Latins, going forth and occupying each a peninsula of its own; or who, as in the case of the Britons of Wales and of Cornwall, have been violently thrust asunder by the intrusion of a hostile people, like a wedge, between them; there are, I say, forces widening slowly but surely the breach between the languages spoken by the one section of the divided people and by the other, multiplying the points of diversity between the speech of those to whom even dialectic differences may once have been unknown. This, that they should travel daily further from one another, comes to pass quite independently of any such vast revolution as that of which we have been just speaking. If there had been no Norman Conquest, nor any event similar to it, it is yet quite certain that English would be now a very

different language from any at the present day spoken in Germany or in Holland. Different of course it would be from that conventional language, now recognized in Germany as the only language of books; but very different too from any dialect of that Low German, still popularly spoken on the Frisian coast and lower banks of the Elbe, to which no doubt it would have borne a far closer resemblance. It was indeed already very different when that catastrophe arrived. The six hundred years which, on the briefest calculation, had elapsed since the Saxon immigration to these shores—that immigration had probably begun very much earlier—had in this matter, as in others, left their mark. I will very briefly enumerate some of the dissimilating forces, moral and material, by the action of which those who, so long as they dwelt together, possessed the same language, little by little became barbarians one to the other.

One branch of the speakers of a language engrafts on the old stock various words which the other does not; and this from various causes. It does so by intercourse with new races, into connection with whom it, but not the other branch of the divided family, has been brought. Thus in quite recent times South African English, spoken in the presence of a large Dutch population at the Cape, has acquired such words as 'to treck,' 'to inspan,' 'to outspan,' 'spoor,' 'wildbeest,' 'boor,' in the sense of farmer, of which our English at home knows nothing. So too the great

English colony in India has acquired 'nullah,' 'nautch,' 'nabob,' 'rupee,' 'loot,' 'bungalow,' 'durbar,' with many more. It is true that we too at home have adopted some of these, and understand them all. But suppose there were little or no communication between us at home and our colony in India, no passing from the one to the other, no literature common to both, here are the germs of what would grow in lapse of years to an important element of diversity between the English of England and of India. Or to take another example. The English-speaking race in America have encountered races which we do not encounter here, have been brought into relation with aspects of nature which are quite foreign to Englishmen. For most of these they have adopted the words which they have found ready made to their hands by those who occupied the land before them, or for a while occupied it with them; have borrowed, for example, 'pampas' and 'savannah' from the Indian, 'bayou,' 'cache,' 'crevasse,' 'levée,' from the French of Louisiana or of Canada, 'canyon' (cañon), 'rancho,' 'hacienda,' 'lasso,' the slang verb 'to vamose' (the Spanish vamos, let us go), from the Spaniards of Mexico. In like manner 'squatter,' 'backwoodsman,' 'lumberer,' are words born of a natural condition of things, whereof we know nothing. And this which has thus happened elsewhere, happened also here. The Britons—not to enter into the question whether they added much or little—must have added something, and in the names of

natural objects certainly added a good deal,* to the vocabulary of the Saxon immigrants into this island, of which those who remained in Old Saxony knew nothing. Again, the Danish and Norwegian inroads into England were inroads not of men only but also of words. In all this an important element of dissimilation made itself felt.

Then too, where languages have diverged from one another before any definite settlement has taken place in the dictionary, out of the numerous synonyms for one and the same object which the various dialects of the common language afford, one people will perpetuate one, and the other another, each of them after a while losing sight altogether of that on which their choice has not fallen. That mysterious sentence of death which strikes words, we oftentimes know not why, others not better, it may be worse, taking their room, will frequently cause in process of time a word to perish from one branch of what was once a common language, while it lives on and perhaps unfolds itself into a whole family in the other. Thus of the words which the Angles and Saxons brought with them from beyond the sea, some have lived on upon our English soil, while they have perished in that which might be called, at least by comparison, their native soil. Innumerable others, on the contrary, have here died out, which have continued to flourish there. As a specimen of those which have found English

* See Isaac Taylor, *Words and Places*, 2nd edit. p. 193.

air more healthful than German we may instance 'bairn.' This, once common to all the Gothic languages, is now extinct in all of the Germanic group, and has been so for centuries, 'kind' having taken its place, while it lives with us and in the languages of the Scandinavian family. Others, on the contrary, after an existence longer or shorter with us, have finally disappeared here, while they still enjoy a vigorous life on the banks of the Elbe and the Eyder. A vulture is not here any more a 'geir' (Holland), nor a rogue a 'skellum' (Urquhart), nor an uncle (a mother's brother) an 'eame,' but 'geir' and 'schelm' and 'oheim' still maintain a vigorous existence there. Each of these words which has perished, and they may be counted by hundreds and thousands, has been replaced by another, generally by one which is strange to the sister language, such as either it never knew, or of which it has long since lost all recollection. 'Languages,' as Max Müller has said, 'so intimately related as Greek and Latin have fixed on different expressions for son, daughter, brother, woman, man, sky, earth, moon, hand, mouth, tree, bird, &c. It is clear that when the working of this principle of natural selection is allowed to extend more widely, languages, though proceeding from the same source, may in time acquire a totally different nomenclature for the commonest objects.'* There is thus

* *On the Science of Language*, 1st Ser. p. 271, *sqq.* See too on this 'divergence of dialects' of which we are treating, Marsh, *Origin and History of the English Language*, p. 82, *sqq.*

at work a double element of estrangement of the one from the other. In what has gone a link between them has been broken; in what has come in its room an element of diversity has been introduced.

Again, words in one language and in the other will in tract of time and under the necessities of an advancing civilization appropriate to themselves a more exact domain of meaning than they had at the first, yet will not appropriate exactly the same; or one will enlarge its meaning and the other not; or in some other way one will drift away from moorings to which the other remains true. Our 'timber' is the same word as the German 'zimmer,' but it has not precisely the same meaning; nor 'rider' as 'ritter,' nor 'hide' as 'haut,' nor 'beam' as 'baum,' nor 'reek' as 'rauch,' nor 'deer' as 'thier,' nor 'acre' as 'acker.' 'Booby' suggests an intellectual deficiency, 'bube' a moral depravity. 'Lust' in German has no subaudition of sinful desire; it has within the last two hundred years acquired such in English. 'Knight' and 'knecht' have travelled in very different directions.* Here is another element of divergence between sister languages, evermore at work to make two what once was one.

But further, in the same way as the bulk and sinews of an arm rapidly increase, being put to vigorous use, while the other limbs, whose poten-

* In like manner 'vicus' is not identical in meaning with οἶκος, nor 'sudor' with ὕδωρ, nor 'lego' with λέγω, nor 'cerno' with κρίνω.

tial energies have not been equally called forth, show no corresponding growth, even so it proves with speech. It is indeed marvellous how quickly a language will create, adapt, adopt words in any particular line of things to which those who speak that language are specially addicted; so that while it remains absolutely poor in every other department of speech, it will be nothing less than opulent in this.* It will follow that where races separate, and one group or both seek new seats for themselves, the industrial tendencies of the separated groups, as suggested by the different physical aspects and capabilities of the regions which they occupy, will bring about a large development in each of words and phrases in which the other will have no share. Thus the occupants of this island became by the very conditions of their existence, and unless they were willing to be indeed, what the Latin poet called them, well nigh divided from the whole world, a seafaring

* Pott (*Etymol. Forschung.* 2nd edit. vol. ii. p. 134) supplies some curious and instructive examples of this unfolding of a language in a particular direction. Thus in the Zulu, a Caffre dialect, where the chief or indeed entire wealth consists in cattle, there are words out of number to express cows of different ages, colours, qualities. Instead of helping themselves out as we do by an adjective, as a *white* cow, a *red* cow, a *barren* cow, they have a distinctive word for each of these. *We* do not think or speak much about cocoa nuts, and only seeing them when they are full ripe, have no inducement to designate them in other stages of their growth; but in Lord North's Island, where they are the main support of the inhabitants, they have five words by which to name the fruit in its several stages from the first shoot to perfect maturity.

people. It has followed that the language has grown rich in terms having to do with the sea and with the whole life of the sea, far richer in these than the dialects spoken by the mediterranean people of Germany. They, on the contrary, poor in this domain of words, are far better supplied than we are with those relating to those mining operations which they pursued much earlier, on a scale more extended, and with a greater application of skill, than we have done.

There has been a vigorous activity of political life in England which has needed, and needing has fashioned for itself, a vocabulary of its own. Germany on the contrary is so poor in corresponding terms, that when with the weak beginnings of constitutional forms in our own day some of these terms became necessary, it has been obliged to borrow from us the word 'bill,' though indeed no more than reclaiming and recovering in this a word which had long ago been allowed by the Germans themselves to drop through and disappear.

The same word will obtain a slightly different pronunciation, and a somewhat more marked difference in spelling, in the one language and the other. Where there is no special philological training, a very slight variation in the former will often effectually conceal from the ear, as in the latter from the eye, an absolute identity, and for all practical purposes constitute them not one and the same, but two and different. Most of us in attempting to speak a foreign language, or to understand our own as spoken by a foreigner,

have had practical experience of the obstacles to understanding or being understood, which a very slight departure from the recognized standard of pronunciation will interpose. Nor are differences in spelling less effectual for this. It would be curious to know how many Englishmen who have made fair advances in German, have recognized the entire identity of 'deed' and 'that,' of 'fowl' and 'vogel,' of 'ivy' and 'epheu,' of 'death' and 'tod,' of 'quick' and 'keck,' of 'deal' and 'theil,' of 'clean' and 'klein,' of 'enough' and 'genug.' It is only too easy for those who are using the very same words, to be, notwithstanding, as barbarians to one another.

Again, idioms will come up in one of the divided bodies, which, not being recognized and allowed by the other, they will esteem, should these come under their notice, as violations of the law of the language, or at any rate departures from its purity. Or again idioms, which one people have overlived, and have stored up in the unhonoured lumber-room of the past, will still be in use and honour with the other; and thus it will sometimes come to pass that what seems, and in fact is, the newer swarm, a colony which has gone forth, will have older idioms than the main body of a people which has remained behind, will very often retain an archaic air and old-world fashion about the words they use, their way of pronouncing, their order and manner of combining them. Thus after the Conquest our insular French gradually diverged from the French of

the Continent. The Prioress in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* could speak her French 'full faire and fetishly;' but it was French, as the poet slyly adds,

> 'After the scole of Stratford atte bow,
> For French of Paris was to hire unknowe.'

One of our old chroniclers, writing in the reign of Elizabeth, informs us that by the English colonists within the Pale in Ireland numerous words were preserved in common use,—'the dregs of the old ancient Chaucer English,' as he contemptuously calls them,—which were quite obsolete and forgotten in England itself. Thus they called a spider an 'attercop'—a word, by the way, still in popular use in the North;—a physician a 'leech,' as in poetry he is still styled; a dunghill a 'mixen,'—the word is common to this day all over England; a quadrangle or base-court a 'bawn;'* they employed 'uncouth' in the earlier sense of 'unknown.' Nay more, their pronunciation and general manner of speech was so diverse from that of England, that Englishmen at their first coming over often found it hard or impossible to comprehend. Something of the same sort took place after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the consequent formation of colonies of French Protestants in various places, especially in Amsterdam and other chief cities of Holland. There

* The only two writers whom Richardson quotes as using this word are Spenser and Swift, both writing in Ireland and of Irish matters.

gradually grew up among these what was called 'refugee French,'* which within a generation or two diverged in several particulars from the classical language of France; the divergence being mainly occasioned by the fact that this remained stationary, while the classical language was in motion; this retained words and usages, which the other had dismissed.†

The wear and tear of a language, the using up of its forms and flections, the phonetic decay which is everywhere and in all languages going forward, will yet advance faster in one branch of

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* There is an excellent account of this 'refugee French' in Weiss' *History of the Protestant Refugees of France.*

† Lyell (*On the Antiquity of Man*, p. 466) confirms this from another quarter:—'A German colony in Pennsylvania was cut off from frequent communication with Europe, for about a quarter of a century, during the wars of the French Revolution between 1792 and 1815. So marked had been the effect even of this brief and imperfect isolation, that when Prince Bernhard of Saxe Weimar travelled among them a few years after the peace, he found the peasants speaking as they had done in Germany in the preceding century and retaining a dialect which at home had already become obsolete (see his *Travels in North America*, p. 123). Even after the renewal of the German emigration from Europe, when I travelled in 1841 among the same people in the retired valleys of the Alleghanies, I found the newspapers full of terms half English and half German, and many an Anglo-Saxon word which had assumed a Teutonic dress, as "fencen" to fence, instead of umzäunen, "flauer" for flour instead of "mehl," and so on. What with the retention of terms no longer in use in the mother country and the borrowing of new ones from neighbouring states, there might have arisen in Pennsylvania in five or six generations, but for the influx of new comers from Germany, a mongrel speech equally unintelligible to the Anglo-Saxon and to the inhabitants of the European fatherland.'

the language than in the other—or, if not faster, will light not upon exactly the same forms or the same words, or, if on the same, yet not exactly upon the same letters. Thus the Latin 'sum' and the Greek εἰμί are both greatly worn away,—worn away in comparison to words of rarer use, as sixpences are worn away in comparison with crowns,—but they are not worn away in exactly the same letters; each has kept a letter pertaining to the more primitive form of the word which the other has not kept, and lost a letter which the other has not lost. This too will account for much.

But it would lead me too far, did I attempt to make an exhaustive enumeration of all the forces which are constantly at work, to set ever farther from one another in this matter of language those who once were entirely at one. I have not so much as touched on the effects of soil and climate on the organs of speech, and thus on speech itself. But these causes which I have instanced must suffice. The contemplation of these is enough to make evident that, even could we abstract all the influences upon English which the Norman Conquest has exercised, it would still remain at this day a very different language from any now spoken on the shores of the Northern Sea.*

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* In the contemplation of facts like these it has been sometimes anxiously asked, whether a day will not arrive when the language now spoken alike on this side of the Atlantic and on the other, will divide into two languages, an Old English and a

We must not then set too high the resemblance which under the most favourable circumstances would have existed between English and the

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New. We may, I think, confidently answer, No. There are here mightier forces at work to keep together than those which are at work to divide. Doubtless, if those who went out from among us to people and subdue a new continent, had left our shores two or three centuries earlier than they did, when the language was much farther removed from that ideal after which it was unconsciously striving, and in which, once reached, it has in great measure acquiesced; if they had not carried with them to their new homes their English Bible, their English Shakespeare, and what else of worth had been already uttered in the English tongue; if, having once left us, the intercourse between Old and New England had been entirely broken off, or only rare and partial; there would then have unfolded themselves differences between the language spoken here and there, which, in tract of time accumulating and multiplying, might in the end have constituted the languages no longer one but two. As it is, however, the joint operation of those three causes, namely, that the separation did not take place in the infancy or early youth of the language, but only in its ripe manhood, that England and America own a body of literature, to which they alike look up and appeal as containing the authoritative standards of the language, that the intercourse between the two people has been large and frequent, hereafter probably to be larger and more frequent still, has effectually wrought up to this day. It has been strong enough so to traverse, repress, and check all those forces which tend to divergence, that the *written* language of educated men on both sides of the water remains precisely the same, their *spoken* manifesting a few trivial differences of idiom; while even among those classes which do not consciously acknowledge any ideal standard of language, there are scarcely wider differences, in some respects far narrower, than exist between inhabitants of different provinces in this one island of England; and in the future we may reasonably anticipate that these differences, so far from multiplying, will rather diminish and disappear (See Dwight, *Modern Philology*, 1st Series, p. 141).

other dialects of the Gothic stock; even while we may be quite certain that they might have resembled one another far more nearly than now they do. Let us endeavour a little to realize to ourselves English as it might then have been; and in view of this consider first the disturbing forces which the Norman occupation of England brought with it, and how they acted upon the language; so we shall be better able to measure how it would have fared with this but for those.

The Battle of Hastings had been lost and won. Whether under more prudent leadership the Saxon battle-axes might not have proved a match for the Norman spears we cannot now determine. But the die was cast. The invader had on that day so planted his foot on English soil, that all after efforts were utterly impotent to dislodge him. But it took nearly three centuries before the two races, the victors and the vanquished, who now dwelt side by side in the same land, were thoroughly reconciled and blended into one people. During the first century which followed the Conquest, the language of the Saxon population was, as they were themselves, utterly crushed and trodden under foot. A foreign dynasty, speaking a foreign tongue, and supported by an army of foreigners, was on the throne of England; Norman ecclesiastics filled all the high places of the Church, filled probably every place of honour and emolument; Norman castles studded the land. During the second century, a

reaction may very distinctly be traced, at first most feeble, but little by little gathering strength, on the part of the conquered race to reassert themselves, and as a part of their reassertion to reassert the right of English to be the national language of England. In the third century after the Conquest it was at length happily evident that Normandy was for ever lost, that for Norman and Englishman alike there was no other sphere but England; this reassertion of the old Saxondom of the land gaining strength every day; till, as a visible token that the vanquished were again the victors, in the year 1349 English and not French was the language taught in the schools of this land.

But the English, which thus emerged from this struggle of centuries in which it had refused to die, was very different from that which had entered into it. The whole of its elaborate inflections, its artificial grammar, showed tokens of thorough disorganization and decay; indeed most of it had already disappeared. How this came to pass I will explain to you in the excellent words of the late Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford. 'Great and speedy,' he observes, 'must have been the effect of the Norman Conquest in ruining the ancient grammar. The leading men in the state having no interest in the vernacular, its cultivation fell immediately into neglect. The chief of the Saxon clergy deposed or removed, who should now keep up that supply of religious Saxon literature, of the copiousness of which we may judge

even in our day by the considerable remains that have outlived hostility and neglect? Now that the Saxon landowners were dispossessed, who should patronize the Saxon bard, and welcome the man of song in the halls of mirth? The shock of the Conquest gave a deathblow to Saxon literature. The English language continued to be spoken by the masses who could speak no other; and here and there a secluded student continued to write in it. But its honours and emoluments were gone, and a gloomy period of depression lay before the Saxon language as before the Saxon people. The inflection system could not live through this trying period. Just as we accumulate superfluities about us in prosperity, but in adversity we get rid of them as encumbrances, and we like to travel light when we have only our own legs to carry us—just so it happened to the English language. For now all these sounding terminations that made so handsome a figure in Saxon courts; the -AN, the -UM; the -ERA, the -ANA; the -IGENNE and -IGENOUM; all these, as superfluous as bells on idle horses, were laid aside when the exercise of power was gone.'

But another force, that of external violence, had been at work also for the breaking up of the grammar of the language. A conquering race under the necessity of communicating with a conquered in their own tongue make very short work of the niceties of grammar in that tongue, brush all these away, as so much trumpery, which they will not be at the pains to master. If they can

make their commands intelligible, this is all about which they concern themselves. They go straight to this mark; but whether, in so doing, adjective agree with substantive, or verb with noun, or the proper case be employed, for this they care nothing; nay, there is a certain satisfaction, a secret sense of superiority, in stripping the language of its ornament, breaking it up into new combinations, compelling it to novel forms, and making thus not merely the wills, but the very speech of the conquered, to confess its subjection.

Nor was it the grammar only which had thus become a ruin. Those three centuries had made enormous havoc in the vocabulary as well. Rich and expressive as this had been in the palmy days of Anglo-Saxon literature, abundantly furnished as undoubtedly then it was with words having to do with matters of moral and intellectual concern, and in the nomenclature of the passions and affections, it was very far from being richly supplied with them now. Words which dealt with the material interests of every-day life could scarcely help remaining familiar and vernacular; but those pertaining to higher domains of thought, feeling, and passion and to all loftier culture either moral or material, had in vast multitudes dropt out of use and been forgotten. Curious illustrations have been given of the destruction which had been wrought in some of the most illustrious and far-branching families of words, so that of some of these there did not half

a dozen, of others there did not one representative, survive.*

The destruction of grammatical forms was, it is true, only the hastening and carrying out more completely what would anyhow have come to pass, although not so thoroughly, nor yet at so early a date. There is nothing more certain than that all languages in their historical period are in a continual process of simplifying themselves, dropping their subtler distinctions, allowing the mere collocation of words in their crude state or other devices of the same kind to do what once was done by inflection. To this subject, however, I shall have occasion by and bye to recur; I will not therefore dwell upon it here. But the insufficiency of the vocabulary, consequent in part on the impoverishment of it, in part on the novel thoughts and things claiming to find utterance through it, was less tolerable; happily too was capable of remedy; which the failure of grammatical forms, even if remedy had been looked for, was not.

Two ways were open here. An attempt might have been made to revive and recover the Saxon words which had been lost and let go; and where new needs demanded expression, to fabricate from the vernacular words which should correspond to these new needs. Now, if the revival of the English nationality had meant the expulsion of the dominant Norman race, this would very probably

* Thus see Marsh, *Origin and History of the English Language*, pp. 113, 443.

have been the course taken; and the reaction would have put under a common ban language and institutions alike. But happily it meant no such thing. It meant the blending of the two races into one, the forming of a new English nation by the gradual coalition of the two, by the growing consciousness that this England was the equal heritage of both, the welfare of which was the common interest of both. It was not on either side a triumph, or rather, as are all reconciliations, it was on both sides a triumph. But where under these circumstances should a supply of the new necessities be so naturally looked for as from the French? That was the language of one of the parties in this happy transaction; of the one which, in respect of language, was giving up far the most, and which therefore might fairly look for this partial compensation. Words of theirs, few as compared with those which afterwards found an entrance into the English tongue, but not few in themselves, had already effected a lodgement there; others, if not adopted, had become more or less familiar to English ears; not to say that the language which they spoke embodied a literature far in advance at that time of any other in modern Europe, a literature eagerly read here as elsewhere in originals or translations more or less free, representing, as it did, that new world which was springing up, and not, as the Anglo-Saxon did, an old world which was passing or had past away.

Now it is a very interesting question, and one

which often has been discussed, What proportion do the French words which then found their way into the language, or which have subsequently entered by the door which was thus opened to them, by the declaration then virtually made that their admission was *not* contrary to the genius of the language, bear to the original stock of the language, on which they were engrafted? A recent enquirer, who professes to have made an inventory of the whole language, has arrived at this result, namely, that considerably more than one half of our words, not indeed of those which we use in writing, still less in speaking, but more than one half of those registered in our dictionaries are Romanic,* are therefore the result of the Norman Conquest, and but for it with very few exceptions would not have found their way to us at all.

I believe the proportion which he indicates to be quite too high, and the data on which his calculation proceeds to be altogether misleading. But without entering upon this question, and assuming proportions which I am persuaded are more accurate, let us suppose that there are in round numbers one hundred thousand words in the English language,—it is easy to make them any number according to the principle upon which we start, to bring them up to half as many again, or to reduce them, as some have done, to less than one half,—and let us further suppose that

* Thommerel, *Recherches sur la Fusion du Franco-Normand et de l'Anglo-Saxon*, Paris, 1841.

some thirty thousand of these have come to us through that contact with France into which the Battle of Hastings and its consequences brought us, and but for these would never have reached us at all. Let us, I say, assume this; and a problem the most interesting presents itself to us—namely, how should we, or whoever else might in that case have been at this moment living in England, have supplied the absence of these words? What should we have done if the language had never received these additions? It would be a slight and shallow answer, in fact no answer at all, to reply, We should have done without them. We *could not* have done without them. The words which we thus have, and in that other case would not have had, express a multitude of facts, thoughts, feelings, conceptions, which, rising up before a people growing in civilization, in knowledge, in learning, in intercourse with other lands, in consciousness of its own vocation in this world, *must* have found their utterance by one means or another, could not have gone without some words or other to utter them. The problem before us is, *what* these means would have been; by what methods the language would have helped itself, if it had been obliged, like so many sister dialects, to draw solely on its own resources, to rely on home manufactures, instead of importing, as it was able to do, so many serviceable articles ready made from abroad.

To this question I answer first and generally, and shall afterwards enter into particulars, that

necessity is the mother of invention, and that many powers of the language, which are now in a great measure dormant, which have been only partially evoked, would have been called into far more frequent and far more vigorous exercise, under the stress of those necessities which would then have made themselves felt. Take, for example, the power of composition, that is, of forming new words by the combination of old—a power which the language possesses, though it is one which has grown somewhat weak and stiff through disuse. This would doubtless have been appealed to far more frequently than actually it has been. Thrown back on itself, the language would have evolved out of its own bosom, to serve its various wants, a far larger number of compound words than it has now produced. This is no mere guess of mine. You have only to look at the sister German language—*half*-sister it is now, it would have been *whole* sister but for that famous field of Hastings—and observe what it has effected in this line, how it has stopped the gaps of which it has gradually become aware by aid of these compound words, and you may so learn what *we*, under similar conditions, would have done. Thus, if we had not found it more convenient to adopt the French 'desert,' if English had been obliged, like the spider, to spin a word out of its own bowels, it might have put 'sand-waste' together, as the German actually has done. This and other words I shall suggest may sound strange to you at first hearing, but would have long left off their strange-

ness, had they been current for some hundreds of years. If we had not the Low-Latin 'massacre,' we might have had 'blood-bath,' which would not have been a worse word in English than in German. So too, if we had not had 'deluge,' the Latin 'diluvium,' we too might have lighted on 'sin-flood,' as others have done. A duel might have been a 'two-fight' or 'twifight,' following the analogy of 'twilight' and 'twibill.' Instead of 'pirate' we might have had 'sea-robber;' indeed, if I do not mistake, we have the word. We should have needed a word for 'hypocrisy;' but the German 'scheinheiligkeit' at any rate suggests that 'shewholiness' might have effectually served our turn. This last example is from the Greek, but the Greek in our tongue entered in the rear of the Latin, and would not have entered except by the door which that had opened.

Let me at the same time observe that the fact of the Germans having fallen on these combinations does not make it in the least certain that we should have fallen upon the same. There is a law of necessity in the evolution of languages; they pursue certain courses on which we may confidently count. But there is a law of liberty no less, and this liberty, making itself felt in this region, together with a thousand other causes, leaves it quite certain that in some, and possibly in all these instances, we should have supplied our wants in some other way, not travelled in exactly the same paths as they have struck out for themselves. Still the examples which I have given

sufficiently indicate to us the *direction* which the language would have taken.

But we are not here driven to a region of conjectures, or to the suggesting what *might* have been done. We can actually appeal to a very numerous company of these compound words, which have been in the language; but which have been suffered to drop, the Latin competitors for some reason or other having, in that struggle for existence to which words are as much exposed as animals, carried the day against it. Now we may confidently affirm that all, or very nearly all, of these would have survived to the present hour, would constitute a part of our present vocabulary, if they had actually been wanted; and they would have been wanted, if competing French words, following in the train of the conqueror, had not first made them not indispensable, and then pushed them from their places. When I say this I do not mean to imply that these words were all actually born before the Norman Conquest, but only that the Conquest brought influences to bear, which were too strong for them, and in the end cut short their existence.

Thus, if we had not proverb, 'soothsaw' would have served our turn; 'sourdough' would have supplied the place of leaven; 'wellwillingness' of benevolence; 'againbuying' of redemption; 'againrising' of resurrection; 'undeadliness' of immortality; 'uncunningness' of ignorance; 'unmildness' of asperity; 'forefighter' of champion; 'greatdoingly' of magnificently. 'To after-

think' (still in use in Lancashire) might have stood for to repent; 'medeful' for meritorious; 'untellable' for ineffable; 'dearworth' for precious (these all are in Wiclif). Chaucer has 'foreword' for promise; 'bodeword' for prohibition; and *Piers Ploughman* 'goldhoard' for treasure; 'tongful' (see Bosworth) would have stood for loquacious; 'truelessness' for perfidy. Jewel has 'foretalk' for preface; Holland 'sunstead' for solstice; 'leechcraft' for medicine; 'wordcraft' for logic. 'Starconner' (Gascoigne) did service once side by side with astrologer; 'halfgod' (Golding) had the advantage over 'demi-god,' that it was all of one piece; 'to eyebite' (Holland) told its story at least as well as to fascinate; 'weaponshew' (the word still lives in Scotland) as review; 'shriftfather' as confessor; 'earshrift' (Tyndale) is only two syllables, while auricular confession is eight; 'waterfright' is preferable to our awkward hydrophobia. The lamprey (lambens petram) would have been, as indeed in our country parts it is now, the 'suckstone' or the 'lickstone;' and the anemone the 'windflower.' For remorse of conscience we might have had, and it exactly corresponds, 'ayenbite of inwyt,' being as this is, the title of a remarkable religious treatise of the middle of the fourteenth century.* Emigrants

* The *Ayenbite of Inwyt* is, in a philological point of view, one of the most valuable of the many valuable books which the *Early English Text Society* has rendered accessible at an almost inconceivably low price to all who wish to study the origins of the English language.

would be everywhere called what they are even now called in many districts of the North, 'outwanderers' or 'outgangers.'

These two words which I have last instanced may serve further to remind us that with the absence from the language of the Latin prefixes, the Saxon ones would have been brought far more into play. The Latin prefixes which we employ the most frequently, or rather which are oftenest found in words which we have adopted, are 'sub' as in 'subdue,' 'subtract,' 'de' as in 'descendant,' 'deprive,' 'circum' as in 'circumference,' 'circumvent,' and 'præ' or 'pro' as in 'predecessor,' 'progenitor.' Had these been wanting, the Latin words to which they are prefixed would have been wanting too. How would the language have fared without them? Not so ill. They would have left no chasm which it would not have been comparatively easy to fill up. Thus if the speakers of English had not possessed 'subjugate' they would have had 'underyoke,' if not 'subvert,' yet still 'underturn,' and so on with many more even now to be found in Wiclif's Bible and elsewhere. There is not at the present moment a single word in the English language—one or two may perhaps survive in the dialects—beginning with the prefix 'um.' There were once a great many. An embrace was an 'umgripe' or a gripe round (um = ἀμφί), a circuit an 'umgang;' the circumference or periphery of a circle was the 'umstroke.' The last appearance of 'umstroke' is in Fuller, while it would be very difficult to find so late an example

of either of the others. We might have had, and probably should have had in the case which I am imagining, a large group of such words instead of those now beginning with 'circum.' In the absence of 'præ' or 'pro,' 'fore,' which even now enters into so many of our words, as 'foretell,' 'forewarn,' would have entered into more. As we have just seen, for preface we should have had 'foretalk,' or 'forespeech' (*Ayenbite*); and so also for predecessor 'foreganger,' for progenitor 'foreelder;'—in all this I am not guessing, but am everywhere speaking of words which existed once in the language.

The prefix 'for,' conveying the idea of privation or deterioration, and corresponding to the German 'ver,' to which we already owe several excellent words, 'forlorn,' 'forbid,' 'forgo,' would have yielded us many more, each one of which would have rendered some Latin word superfluous. We can adduce the participles, 'forwandered' (*Piers Ploughman*), 'forwearied,' 'forwasted,' 'forpined' (all in Spenser), or the verbs 'forfaren,' to go to ruin, 'forshapen,' to deform (*Piers Ploughman*), with other words not a few, as pledges of how much more in this direction, if need had been, the language could have effected. 'Mis' too, which already does much work, as in 'misplace,' 'mislead,' would have been called to do more; instead of to abuse we should have had 'to miscall;' and the like. It would have fared with 'after' in the same way. Instead of our successors we should speak of our 'aftercomers;' consequences would have been 'aftercomings,' post-

humous 'afterborn,' and a postscript an 'aftertale.' All these words existed once.

Something, again, may be concluded of what the English-speaking race would have been able to effect, if thrown exclusively upon such wealth as it possessed at home, by considering the more or less successful attempts of some who have chosen, without any such absolute necessity, to travel the paths, which in that case there would have been no choice but to tread. Thus Sir John Cheke in his Version of St. Matthew, has evidently substituted, as often as he could, Saxon words for Greek and Latin; thus for proselyte he has substituted 'freshman,' for prophet 'foreshewer,' for lunatic 'mooned.' Puttenham in the terms of art which he employs in his *History of English Poesy* has made a similar attempt, though with no remarkable success. Fairfax, author of a curious and in some respects an interesting book, called *The Bulk and Selvedge of the World*, has done better. He too would fain by his own example show how very rarely even in a subject of some considerable range it is necessary to employ any other words than such as are the home-growths of England; that 'moreness' does its work as well as plurality, 'findings' as inventions. I extract a brief passage from the introduction, at once for its bearing on the subject which we have in hand, and also as itself a testimony of the vigorous English which it was possible under such self-imposed limitations to write: 'I think it will become those of us, who

have a more hearty love for what is our own, than wanton longings after what is others', to fetch back some of our own words that have been jostled out in wrong, that worse from elsewhere might be hoisted in; or else to call in from the fields and waters, shops and workhousen, that well fraught world of words that answers works, by which all learners are taught to do, and not to make a clatter.'

I remember once, this subject being under familiar discussion, and one present vaunting the powers of our Anglo-Saxon tongue to produce words of its own which should thus answer any and every need, and this without being beholden to any foreign tongue, another present put him to the proof, demanding a sufficient native equivalent for 'impenetrability.' The challenge was accepted, and without a moment's delay 'unthoroughfaresomeness' was produced. The word may not be a graceful one, but take it to pieces, and you will find that there is nothing wanting to it. For what is impenetrability? It is the quality in one thing which does not allow it to be pierced or passed through by another. And now dissect its proposed equivalent; and first, detaching from it its two prefixes, and affixes as many, you have 'fare' or passage for the body of the word; you have next 'thoroughfare' or place through which there is a passage; by aid of the suffix 'some' you obtain the adjective 'thoroughfaresome,' or capable of being passed through; the negative prefix 'un' gives you 'unthoroughfaresome,' the negation of this; and the second suffix

'ness,' 'unthoroughfaresomeness,' or the incapability of being passed through, in other words, impenetrability.

We can thus, I think, trace, and not altogether by mere guesswork or at random, some of the paths along which English would have travelled, had it been left to itself, and to its own natural and orderly development, instead of being forced by the stress of external circumstances, into paths in part at least altogether new. We can assert with confidence that it would have been no unserviceable, shiftless, nor ignoble tongue; and this, while we gladly and thankfully acknowledge that it has done better, being what it is, that composite language in which our English Bible is written, in which Shakespeare and Milton have garnered for the after world the rich treasure of their minds.

Let us, before quite dismissing this subject, contemplate two or three points which broadly distinguish English as it is from English as it would then have been. The language, we may be quite sure, would in that case have been far more abundantly supplied with inflections than now it is. It was, as we saw just now, during the period of extreme depression which followed on the Conquest that it stripped itself so bare of these. I do not of course mean to imply that a vast number of inflections would not, according to the universal law of all languages, have anyhow fallen away. But continuing as it would have done, the language of the

Church, the Court, and of literature, it would never have become that mere *torso* which it was, when at length it emerged victorious from its three hundred years of conflict for supremacy on this English soil. We should assuredly have possessed a much more complex grammatical system, probably as complex or nearly as complex as the German possesses at the present day. Foreigners complain that even now English is hard enough to master; it would assuredly have been much harder then. There would have been many more distinctions to remember. Our nouns substantive, instead of being all declined in one way, would have been declined some in one way, some in another; they would probably have had their three genders,—masculine, feminine, and neuter; and have modified according to these the terminations of the adjectives agreeing with them; and very much more of this kind, now got rid of, and on the whole happily got rid of, would have been retained.

The language is infinitely richer now in synonyms than but for this settlement of French and Latin in its midst it would have been—in words covering the same, or very nearly the same, spaces of meaning. In cases almost innumerable it has what we may call *duplicate* words; there can be very few languages in the world so amply furnished with these. The way it has obtained them is this. It has kept the Saxon word, and superadded to this the Latin, or the French derived from the Latin. Thus we have kept 'heavenly,' but we have added 'celestial;' we have not dis-

missed 'earthly,' though we have acquired 'terrestrial;' 'providence' has not put 'foresight' out of use, nor 'flower' 'bloom,' nor 'reign' 'kingdom,' nor 'omnipotent' 'almighty.' I might go on instancing these without end, but I have dwelt more fully on this matter elsewhere,* and here therefore will not urge it more.

Nor can it be said that this abundance is a mere piece of luxury, still less that it is an embarrassment. Poetry is evidently a gainer by it, in the wider choice of expressions which it has thus at command, to meet its manifold exigencies, now of rhyme, now of melody, and now of sentiment. And prose is not less a gainer, demanding as it does rhythm and modulation, though of another kind, quite as urgently as poetry does, and having these much more within its reach through this choice of words than otherwise it would have had. Thus most of us have admired in Handel's greatest composition the magnificent effect of those words from the Apocalypse, 'For the Lord God *omnipotent* reigneth.' Now the word which our Translators have here rendered 'omnipotent,' they have everywhere else rendered 'almighty;' but substitute 'almighty' here, and how manifest the loss. What a sublime variation have they found within their reach.†

* *Study of Words*, 12th edit. p. 194.

† I only know one in modern times, but he is one whose judgments must always carry great weight, Dr. Guest, who in his *History of English Rhythms* takes a less favourable view of the results of the large importation of French and Latin words into the language:—'The evils resulting from these importations

These are manifest gains; but for all this I would not affirm that everything is gain. Thus if our Saxon had never been disturbed, there would certainly have been in the language a smaller number of what our ancestors called, 'ink-horn terms,' the peculiar property of the scholar, not used and not understood by the poor and the illiterate. More words would be what all words ought to be, and once were, 'thought-pictures,' transparent with their own meaning, telling their own story to everybody. Thus if I say that Christ 'sympathizes' with his people, or even if I say, 'has compassion,' I am not sure that every one follows me; but if I were to say, He 'fellow-feels,' and the word existed not long ago, as 'fellow-feeling' does still, all would understand. 'Redemption' conveys to our poor a somewhat vague impression of some great benefit; but

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have, I think, been generally underrated in this country. When a language must draw upon its own wealth for a new term, its forms and analogies are kept fresh in the minds of those who so often use them. But with the introduction of foreign terms, not only is the symmetry—the *science*—of the language injured, but its laws are brought less frequently under notice, and are the less used, as their application becomes more difficult. If a new word were added to any of the purer languages, such as the Sanscrit, the Greek, or the Welsh, it would soon be the root of numerous offshoots, substantives, adjectives, verbs, &c., all formed according to rule, and modifying the meaning of their root according to well-known analogies. But in a mixed and broken language few or no such consequences follow. The word remains barren and the language is "enriched" like a tree covered over with wreaths taken from the boughs of its neighbour; which carries a goodly show of foliage and withers beneath the shade.'

'gainbuying' or 'againbuying,' which we have seen in Wiclif, would have conveyed a far more distinct one. 'Middler'—this word also to be found in Wiclif—would have the same advantage over mediator. Even our Authorized Version of Scripture, little as we have to complain of there, would itself not have lost, if the authors of it had been pushed and actually compelled to use the store of Saxon vocables at their command; for instance, if at 1 Cor. xv. 40, instead of 'celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial,' they had had no choice but to write 'heavenly bodies and bodies earthly,' all would have understood them then; I very much doubt whether all understand them now.

Other gains there might have been. Thus in the matter of style, it would not have been so fatally easy to write bad English, and to fancy this bad to be good, as now it is. That worst and most offensive kind of bad English, which disguises poverty of thought, and lack of any real command over the language, by the use of big, hollow, lumbering Latin words, would not have been possible. It is true that on the other hand the opportunities of writing a grand, sustained, stately English would not have been near so many, but for the incoming of that multitude of noble words which Latin, the stateliest of all languages, has lent us. Something not very different indeed from Swift's or Dryden's prose might have existed; but nothing in the least resembling the stately march of Milton's or Jeremy Taylor's. A good style would have been a much simpler, less com-

plex matter than now it is; the language would have been an instrument with not so many strings, an organ with fewer pipes and stops, of less compass, with a more limited diapason, wanting many of the grander resonances which it now possesses; but easier to play on, requiring infinitely less skill; not so likely to betray into gross absurdities, or to make an open show of the incapacity of such as handled it badly.

On the whole, then, while, as will generally happen in a mixed world like ours, that Norman Conquest, in the influences which it has exerted on the English language, has no doubt brought with it losses no less than gains, we may boldly affirm that the gains very far transcend the losses. As so many things have wrought together to make England what she is, as we may trace in our 'rough island story' so many wonderful ways in which good has been educed from evil, and events the most unpromising have left their blessing behind them, not otherwise has it been here. That which brought down our English tongue from its pride of place, stript it of so much in which it gloried, condemned it, as might have seemed, if not to absolute extinction, yet henceforward to serve as the mere patois of an illiterate race of subject bondsmen and hinds, it was even that very event which in its ultimate consequences wrought out for it a completeness and a perfection which it would never else have obtained. So strange in their ultimate issues are the ways of Providence with men.

LECTURE III.

GAINS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

IT is with good right that we speak of some languages as *living*, of others as *dead*. All spoken languages may be ranged in the first class; for as men will never consent to use a language without more or less modifying it in their use, will never so far forgo their own activity as to leave it exactly where they found it, there follows from this that so long as it is thus the utterance of human thought and feeling, it will inevitably show itself alive, and that by many infallible proofs, by motion, growth, acquisition, loss, progress, and decay. This title therefore of living is one which a spoken language abundantly deserves; for it is one in which, spoken as it is by living men, *vital* energies are still at work. It is one which is in course of actual evolution; which, if the life that animates it be a healthy one, is appropriating and assimilating to itself what it anywhere finds congenial to its own life, multiplying its resources, increasing its wealth; while at the same time it is casting off useless and cumbersome forms, dismissing from its vocabulary words of which it finds no use, rejecting by a re-active energy the foreign and heterogeneous, which may

for a while have forced themselves upon it. In the process of all this it may easily make mistakes; in the desire to simplify, it may let go distinctions which were not useless, and which it would have been better to retain; the acquisitions which it makes are very far from being all gains; it sometimes rejects as worthless, and suffers to die out, words which were most worthy to have lived. So far as it commits any of these faults its life is not healthy; it is not growing richer but poorer; there are here tokens, however remote, of disorganization, decay, and ultimate death. But still it lives, and even these misgrowths and malformations, the rejection of this good, the taking up into itself of that ill, even these errors are themselves the utterances and evidences of life. A dead language knows nothing of all this. It is dead, because books, and not now any generation of living men, are the guardians of it, and what they guard, they guard without change. Its course has been completely run, and it is now equally incapable of gaining and of losing. We may come to know it better; but in itself it is not, and never can be, other than it was before it ceased from the lips of men.

Our own is, of course, a living language still. It is therefore gaining and losing. It is a tree in which the vital sap is circulating yet; and as this works, new leaves are continually being put forth by it, old are dying and dropping away. I propose to consider some of the evidences of this life at work in it still; and in this lecture and in the

following I shall take for my subject, the *sources* from which the English language has enriched its vocabulary, the *periods* at which it has made the chief additions to this, the *character* of the additions which at different periods it has made, and the *motives* which induced it to seek them.

In my first lecture I dwelt with some emphasis on the fact, that the core, the radical constitution of our language, is Anglo-Saxon; so that, composite or mingled as it is, it is such only in its vocabulary, not in its construction, inflections, or generally its grammatical forms. These are all of one piece; there is indeed no amalgamation possible in these; and whatever of new has come in has been compelled to conform itself to the old. The framework is native; only a part of the filling in is exotic; and of this filling in, of these comparatively more recent accessions, I now propose to speak.

The first great augmentation by foreign words of our Saxon vocabulary, and that which in importance has very far exceeded all the other put together, was a consequence, although not an immediate one, of the battle of Hastings. You will have gathered from what I have said already that I am unable to share in the sentimental regrets over the results of that battle in which Thierry has led the way. With the freest acknowledgment of the miseries entailed for a while on the Saxon race by the Norman Conquest, I can regard that Conquest in no other light than as the making of England; a judgment, it is true, but a judgment

and a mercy in one. It was a rough and rude, and yet most necessary discipline, to which the race which for so many hundred years had occupied the English soil was thereby submitted; a great tribulation, yet one not undeserved, and which could not have been spared; so grievously relaxed were all the moral energies of Saxon England at the time of the Conquest, so far had all the vigour of those institutions by which alone a nation lives, decayed and departed. God never showed more plainly that He had a great part for England to play in the world's story than when He brought hither that aspiring Norman race. Heavily as for a time they laid their hand on the subject people, they did at the same time contribute elements absolutely essential to the future greatness and glory of the land which they made their own. But it is only of their contributions in one particular direction that we have here to speak. Neither did these follow at once. The actual interpenetration of our Anglo-Saxon with any large amount of French words did not find place till a very much later day. Some French words we find very soon after; but in the main the two streams of language continued for a long while separate and apart, even as the two nations remained aloof from one another, a conquering and a conquered, and neither forgetting the fact.

It was not till the latter half of the fourteenth century that French words began to find their way in any very large number into English. There is good reason to think that in these fifty years con-

siderably more effected a permanent settlement here than had so done during the nearly three hundred preceding. In the bringing in of these too much has been ascribed to the influence and example of a single man. Some have praised, others have blamed,* Chaucer overmuch for his share in this work. Standing in the forefront of his time, he no doubt fell in with and set forward movements in the language which were already potently at work. But to suppose that the greater number of French vocables which he employed had never been employed before, were strange to English ears, is to suppose, as Tyrwhitt urges well, that his poetry must have presented to his contemporaries a motley patchwork of language, and leaves it impossible to explain how he should at once have become the popular poet of the nation.

It would be hardly too much to affirm that there is quite as large a proportion of Latin words in *Piers Ploughman* as in Chaucer—certainly a very remarkable fact, when we call to mind that *Piers Ploughman* dates some twenty or thirty years earlier than Chaucer's more important poems, that in form it cleaves to the old alliterative scheme of versification, and in substance evidently addresses itself not to the courtier or the

* Thus Alexander Gil, head-master of St. Paul's school, in his book, *Logonomia Anglica*, 1621, *Preface*: Huc usque peregrinæ voces in linguâ Anglicâ inauditæ. Tandem circa annum 1400 Galfridus Chaucerus, infausto omine, vocabulis Gallicis et Latinis poësin suam famosam reddidit. The whole passage, which is too long to quote, as indeed the whole book, is curious.

churchman, but claims to find, as we know it actually found, its hearing from the commonalty of the realm. Its religious, ecclesiastical, and ethical terminology is abundant, and with rare exceptions is Latin throughout—which, when we keep in mind the opulence in such terms of the earlier Anglo-Saxon, signally attests the havoc which had been wrought during the centuries of depression in the finer elements of the language. We meet there with 'abstinence,' 'assoil,' 'avarice,' 'benigne,' 'bountée,' 'cardinal vertues,' 'conscience,' 'charitée,' 'chastitée,' 'confession,' 'consistory,' 'contemplatif,' 'contrition,' 'indulgence,' 'leautée,' 'monial,' 'recreant,' 'relic,' 'reverence,' 'sanctitée,' 'spiritual,' 'temporaltée,' 'unitée.' Already we find in *Piers Ploughman* French words which the English language has finally proved unable to take up into itself, as 'brocage,' 'chibolles,' 'creaunt,' 'devoir,' 'fenestres,' 'losengerie.' The real difference between Langlande and Chaucer is that the former seems to us, as we read, only to have partially fused into one consistent whole the two elements whereof the language which he writes is composed; while the greater artist,—though he too was a great one,—has brought them into so perfect a chemical combination that we never pause to consider from what quarter the ore which he has wrought into such current money was extracted, whether from the old mines of the land, or from other new ones, opened beyond the sea.

Other considerations will tend to the abating

of the exclusive merit or demerit of Chaucer in this matter. Marsh has put this well, showing that there were other factors beside literature at work for the saturating of English at this time with as much of French as it could healthily absorb. 'It is,' he says, 'a great but very widely spread error, to suppose that the influx of French words in the fourteenth century was due alone to poetry and other branches of pure literature. The law, which now first became organized into a science, introduced very many terms borrowed from the nomenclature of Latin and French jurisprudence; the glass-worker, the enameller, the architect, the brass-founder, the Flemish clothier, and the other handicraftsmen, whom Norman taste and luxury invited, or domestic oppression expelled from the Continent, brought with them the vocabularies of their respective arts; and Mediterranean commerce—which was stimulated by the demand for English wool, then the finest in Europe—imported, from the harbours of a sea where French was the predominant language, both new articles of merchandize and the French designation of them. The sciences too, medicine, physics, geography, alchemy, astrology, all of which became known to England chiefly through French channels, added numerous specific terms to the existing vocabulary, and very many of the words, first employed in English writings as a part of the technical phraseology of these various arts and knowledges, soon passed into the domain of common life, in modified or

untechnical senses, and thus became incorporated into the general tongue of society and of books.'

It is true that there happened here what will happen in every attempt to transplant on a large scale the words of one language into another. The soil will not prove kindly for all. Some will take root and thrive; but others, after a longer or shorter interval, will pine and wither and die. Not all the words which Langlande or Chaucer employed found final allowance with us. At the same time, even granting that they were the first sponsors of them, such an issue as this was no condemnation of their attempt. Nothing but actual proof could show whether the language needed, and would therefore absorb these, or not needing, in due time reject them.* How little in excess Chaucer in this matter was, how admirable his *delectus verborum*, is singularly attested by the fact—I state it on Marsh's authority—that there are not more than a hundred French words used by him, such for example as 'misericorde,' 'malure' (malheur) 'penible,' 'ayel,' (aieul) 'tas,' 'gipon,' 'racine,' which have been

* Plautus in the same way uses a multitude of Greek words, which Latin did not want, and therefore refused to absorb; thus, 'clepta,' 'zamia,' 'danista,' 'harpagare,' 'apolactizare,' 'nauclerus,' 'strategus,' 'morologus,' 'phylaca,' 'malacus,' 'sycophantia,' 'euscheme' (εὐσχήμως), 'dulice' (δουλικῶς), [so 'scymnus' by Lucretius], none of which, I believe, are employed except by him; while others, as 'mastigia' and 'techna,' he shares with Terence. Yet only experience could show that they were superfluous; and it was well done to put them on trial.

unable to win a permanent place among us. I cannot say how many *Piers Ploughman* would yield, but we saw just now that it would yield some; Wiclif too would yield a few, such for instance as 'creansur' for debtor; though very far fewer than either of these other.

It is curious to observe to how late a day some of these adoptions kept their ground; which, for all this, they have proved unable to keep to the end. Thus 'mel' (Sylvester) struggled hard and long for a place side by side with honey; 'roy' with king; this last quite obtained one in Scotch. It has fared in the same way with 'egal' (Puttenham); with 'ouvert,' 'mot,' 'baine,' 'mur,' 'ecurie,' 'baston,' 'gite' 'amort,' 'to cass' (all in Holland); with 'rivage,' 'jouissance,' 'noblesse,' 'tort,' 'accoil' (accueillir), 'sell' (= saddle), 'surquedry,' 'foy,' 'spalles' (épaules), 'gree' (gré), all occurring in Spenser; with 'outrecuidance;' with 'to serr' (serrer), 'vive,' 'brocage,' 'reglement,' used all by Bacon; with 'esperance,' 'orgillous' (orgueilleux), 'rondeur,' 'scrimer,' 'amort' (all in Shakespeare). 'Maugre,' 'sans,' 'congie,' 'devoir,' 'dimes,' 'puissance,' and 'bruit,' this last used often in our Bible, were English once; they are not so now. The same holds true of 'dulce,' 'aigredoulce' (= soursweet), of 'volupty' (Sir Thomas Elyot), 'volunty' (Evelyn), 'medisance' (Montagu), 'pucelle' (Ben Jonson), 'petit' (South), 'aveugle,' 'colline' (both in *State Papers*), of 'defailance,' 'plaisance,' 'paysage,' 'pareil' (all in Jeremy Taylor); of 'eloign' (Hacket).

But to return. With Chaucer English literature had made a burst, which it was not able to maintain. Dreary days were before it still. Our morning star, he yet ushered in no dawn which was at the point of breaking. Chaucer has by Warton been well compared to some warm bright day in the very early spring, which seems to announce that the winter is over and gone; but its promise is deceitful; the full bursting and blossoming of the spring-time is yet far off. The long struggle with France, the hundred years' War, which began so gloriously, but which ended so disastrously, even with the loss of our whole ill-won dominion there, the savagery of our wars of the Roses, wars which were a legacy bequeathed to us by that unrighteous conquest, leave a huge gap in our literary history, nearly a century during which very little was done for the cultivation of our native tongue, few important additions to its wealth were made.

The period, however, is notable as that during which for the first time we received a large accession of words directly drawn from the Latin. A small settlement of these, for the most part ecclesiastical, had long since found their home in the bosom of the Anglo-Saxon itself, and had been entirely incorporated with it. The fact that we had received our Christianity from Rome, and that Latin was the constant language of the Church, sufficiently accounts for these. Such were 'monk,' 'bishop' (it was not as Greek but as Latin that these words reached us), 'provost,'

'minster,' 'cloister,' 'candle,' 'psalter,' 'mass,' and the names of certain foreign animals, as 'camel,' 'lion,' or plants or other productions, as 'pepper,' 'fig;' which are all, with slightly different spelling, Anglo-Saxon words.* These, however, were exceptional, and stood to the main body of the language, not as the Romance element of it does now to the Gothic, one power over against another, but as the Spanish or Italian or Arabic words in it stand to the remainder of the language, and could not be affirmed to affect it more.

So soon, however, as French words were brought largely into it, and were found to coalesce kindly with the native growths, this very speedily suggested the going straight to the Latin, and drawing directly from it; and thus in the hundred years after Chaucer no small amount of Latin had penetrated, if not into our speech, yet into our books—words not introduced *through* the French, for they are not, and some of them have at no time been, French; but yet such as would never have established themselves here, if the French, already domesticated among us, had not prepared their way, bridged over the gulf that would have otherwise been too wide between them and the Saxon vocables of our tongue; and suggested the models on which these later adoptions should be framed.

They were not for the most part words which it was any gain to acquire. The period was one

* Guest, *Hist. of English Rhythms*, vol. ii. p. 109.

of great depression of the national spirit; and nothing sympathizes more intimately with this, rising when it rises, and sinking when it sinks, than does language. Not first at the revival of learning, but already at this time began the attempt to flood the language with pedantic words from the Latin; take as specimens of these 'facundious,' 'tenebrous,' 'solacious,' 'pulcritude,' 'consuetude' (all these occur in Hawes), with more of the same fashion which the language has long since disallowed; while others which have maintained their ground, and have deserved to maintain it, were yet employed in numbers quite out of proportion to the Saxon vocables with which they were mingled, and which they altogether overtopped and overshadowed. Chaucer's hearty English feeling, his thorough sympathy with the people, the fact that, scholar as he was, he was yet the poet not of books but of life, and drew his best inspiration from life, all this had kept him, in the main, clear of this fault. But it was otherwise with those who followed. The diction of Lydgate, Hawes, and the other versifiers,—for to the title of poets they have little or no claim,—who filled up the interval between Chaucer and Surrey, is immensely inferior to his; being all stuck over with long and often ill-selected Latin words. The worst offenders in this line, as Campbell himself admits, were the Scotch poets of the fifteenth century. 'The prevailing fault,' he says, 'of English diction, in the fifteenth century, is redundant ornament, and an affectation of anglicising Latin

words. In this pedantry and use of "aureate terms" the Scottish versifiers went even beyond their brethren of the south. . . . . When they meant to be eloquent, they tore up words from the Latin, which never took root in the language, like children making a mock garden with flowers and branches stuck in the ground, which speedily wither.' *

Few, let me here observe by the way, have borne themselves in this hazardous enterprise at once as discreetly and as boldly as Dryden has done; who has thus admirably laid down the motives which induced him to look abroad for words with which to enrich his vocabulary, and the principles which guided him in the selection of such: 'If sounding words are not of our growth and manufacture, who shall hinder me to import them from a foreign country? I carry not out the treasure of the nation which is never to return, but what I bring from Italy I spend in England. Here it remains and here it circulates, for, if the coin be good, it will pass from one hand to another. I trade both with the living and the dead, for the enrichment of our native language. We have enough in England to supply our necessity, but if we will have things of magnificence and splendour, we must get them by commerce. Poetry requires adornment, and that is not to be had from our old Teuton monosyllables; therefore if I find any elegant word in a classic author, I propose it to

* *Essay on English Poetry*, p. 93.

be naturalized by using it myself; and if the public approves of it, the bill passes. But every man cannot distinguish betwixt pedantry and poetry: every man therefore is not fit to innovate. Upon the whole matter a poet must first be certain that the word he would introduce is beautiful in the Latin; and is to consider in the next place whether it will agree with the English idiom: after this, he ought to take the opinion of judicious friends, such as are learned in both languages; and lastly, since no man is infallible, let him use this licence very sparingly; for if too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed not to assist the natives, but to conquer them.' *

This tendency to latinize our speech received a new impulse from the revival of learning, and the familiar re-acquaintance with the master-pieces of ancient literature which went along with this revival. Happily another movement accompanied, or followed hard on this; a movement in England essentially national; and one which stirred our people at far deeper depths of their moral and spiritual life than any mere revival of learning could have ever done; I refer, of course, to the Reformation. It was only among the Germanic nations of Europe, as has often been remarked, that the Reformation struck lasting roots; it found its strength therefore in the Teutonic element of the national character, which also it in turn fur-

* *Dedication of the Translation of the Æneid.*

ther strengthened, purified, and called out. And thus, though Latin came in upon us now faster than ever, and in a certain measure also Greek, yet this found redress and counterpoise, in the contemporaneous unfolding of the more fundamentally popular side of the language. Popular preaching and discussion, the necessity of dealing with truths the most transcendant in a way to be understood not by scholars only, but by 'idiots' as well, all this served to evoke the native resources of our tongue; and thus the relative proportion between the one part of the language and the other was not dangerously disturbed, the balance was not destroyed; as it might easily have been, if only the Humanists had been at work, and not the Reformers as well.

The revival of learning, which made itself first felt in Italy, extended to England, and was operative here, during the reigns of Henry the Eighth and his immediate successors. Having thus slightly anticipated in time, it afterwards ran exactly parallel with, the period during which our Reformation was working itself out. The epoch was in all respects one of immense mental and moral activity, and epochs of this kind never leave a language where they found it. Much in it is changed; much probably added; for the old garment of speech, which once served all needs, has grown too narrow, and serves them now no more. The old crust is broken up, and what was obscurely working before forces itself into sight and recognition. 'Change in language is not, as in many

natural products, continuous; it is not equable, but eminently by fits and starts;' and when the foundations of the mind of a nation are heaving under the operation of truths which it is now for the first time making its own, more important changes will follow in fifty years than in two centuries of calmer or more stagnant existence. Thus the activities and energies which the Reformation awakened among us, as they made themselves felt far beyond the domain of our directly religious life, so they did not fail to make themselves effectually felt in this region among the rest.*

The Reformation had a scholarly, we might say, a scholastic, as well as a popular, aspect.

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* Some lines of Waller reveal to us the sense which in his time scholars had of the rapidity with which the language was changing under their hands. Looking back at changes which the last hundred years had wrought in it, he checked with misgivings such as these his own hope of immortality:

> 'Who can hope his lines should long
> Last in a daily changing tongue?
> While they are new, envy prevails,
> And as that dies, our language fails.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> 'Poets that lasting marble seek,
> Must carve in Latin or in Greek:
> *We* write in sand; our language grows,
> And like the tide our work o'erflows.'

How his misgivings, which assume that the rate of change would continue what it had been, have been fulfilled, every one knows. The two centuries which have elapsed since he wrote, have hardly antiquated a word or a phrase in his poems. If we care very little for them now, this is owing to quite other causes—to their want of moral earnestness more than to any other.

Add this fact to the fact of the revived interest in classical learning, and you will not wonder that a stream of Latin, now larger than ever, began to flow into our language. Thus Puttenham, writing in Queen Elizabeth's reign,* gives a long list of words, some Greek, a few French and Italian, but far the most Latin, which were of quite recent introduction into the language. Some of these it is difficult to understand how the language could so long have done without; as 'method,' 'methodical,' 'function,' 'numerous,' 'penetrate,' 'penetrable,' 'indignity,' 'savage,' 'scientific,' 'delineation,' 'dimension,' 'idiom,' 'significative,' 'compendious,' 'prolix,' 'figurative,' 'impression,' 'inveigle,' 'metrical.' All these he adduces with praise; others, not less commended by him, have failed to hold their ground, as 'placation,' 'numerosity,' 'harmonical.' In his disallowance of 'facundity,' 'implete,' 'attemptat' ('attentat'), he only anticipated the decision of a later day; other words which he condemned no less, as 'audacious,' 'compatible,' 'egregious,' have maintained their ground. These have done the same; 'despicable,' 'destruction,' 'homicide,' 'obsequious,' 'ponderous,' 'portentous,' 'prodigious,' all of them by another writer a little earlier condemned as 'inkhorn terms, smelling too much of the Latin.'

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* In his *Art of English Poesy*, London, 1589, republished in Haslewood's *Ancient Critical Essays upon English Poets and Poesy*, London, 1811, vol. i. pp. 122, 123.

It is curious to note the 'words of art,' as he calls them, which Philemon Holland, a voluminous translator at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century, counts it needful to explain in a glossary appended to his translation of Pliny's *Natural History*.* One can hardly understand how any who cared to consult the book at all would be perplexed by words like these, 'acrimony,' 'austere,' 'bulb,' 'consolidate,' 'debility,' 'dose,' 'ingredient,' 'opiate,' 'propitious,' 'symptom,' all which as novelties he carefully explains. Certainly he has words in his glossary harder and more technical than these; but a vast majority present no greater difficulty than those just adduced.†

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* London, 1601. Besides this work Holland translated the whole of Plutarch's *Moralia*, the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon, Livy, Suetonius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Camden's *Britannia*. His works make a part of the 'library of dulness' in Pope's *Dunciad*:

> 'De Lyra there a dreadful front extends,
> And here the groaning shelves *Philemon* bends'—

very unjustly; the authors whom he has translated are all more or less important, and his versions of them a mine of genuine idiomatic English, neglected by most of our lexicographers, wrought with eminent advantage by Richardson; yet capable of yielding much more than they have yielded yet.

† So too in French it is surprising to find how new are many words, which now constitute an integral part of the language. 'Désintéressement,' 'exactitude,' 'sagacité,' 'bravoure,' were not introduced till late in the seventeenth century. 'Renaissance,' 'emportement,' 'sçavoir-faire,' 'indélébile,' 'désagrément' were all recent in 1675 (Bouhours); 'indévot,' 'intolérance,' 'impardonnable,' 'irréligieux,' were struggling into allowance at the end of the seventeenth century, and not established

The period during which this naturalization of Latin words in the English Language was going actively forward, extended to the Restoration of Charles the Second. It first received a check from the coming up of French tastes, fashions, and habits of thought consequent on that event. The writers whose style was already formed, such as Cudworth and Barrow, continued still to write their stately sentences, Latin in structure, and Latin in diction, but not so those of a younger generation. We may say of this influx of Latin that it left the language vastly more copious, with greatly enlarged capabilities, but somewhat burdened with

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till the beginning of the eighteenth. 'Insidieux' was invented by Malherbe; 'frivolité' is wanting in the earlier editions of the *Dictionary of the Academy;* the Abbé de St. Pierre was the first to employ 'bienfaisance,' the elder Balzac 'féliciter,' Sarrasin 'burlesque,' Rousseau 'investigation,' the Abbé de Pons 'érudit.' Mad. de Sevigné exclaims against her daughter for employing 'effervescence' in a letter (comment dites-vous cela ma fille? Voilà un mot dont je n'avais jamais ouï parler). 'Demagogue' was first hazarded by Bossuet, and counted so bold a novelty that for long none ventured to follow him in its use. Montaigne introduced 'diversion' and 'enfantillage,' the last not without rebuke from contemporaries. Desfontaines first employed 'suicide;' Caron gave to the language 'avant-propos,' Ronsard 'avidité,' Joachim Dubellay 'patrie,' Denis Sauvage 'jurisconsulte,' Ménage 'gracieux' (at least so Voltaire affirms) and 'prosateur,' Desportes 'pudeur,' Chapelain 'urbanité,' and Etienne first brought in, apologizing at the same time for the boldness of it, 'analogie,' (si les oreilles françoises peuvent porter ce mot). 'Accaparer' first appeared in the *Dictionary of the Academy* in 1787; 'préliber' (prælibare) is a word of our own day; and Charles Nodier, if he did not coin, yet revived the obsolete 'simplesse.'—See Génin, *Variations du Langage Français*, pp. 308—319.

its new acquisitions, and not always able to move gracefully under their weight; for, as Dryden has happily said, it is easy enough to acquire foreign words, but to know what to do with them after you have acquired, is the difficulty.

It would indeed have fared ill with the language, if *all* the words which the great writers of this second Latin period proposed as candidates for admission into it, had received the stamp of popular allowance. But happily this was not the case. The re-active powers of the language, enabling it to throw off that which was foreign to it, did not fail to display themselves now, as they had done on former occasions; nor is it too much to affirm that in almost every instance during this period, where the Alien Act was enforced, the sentence of banishment was a just one. Either the word violated the analogy of the language, or was not intelligible, or was not needed, or looked ill, or sounded ill; or some other valid reason existed against it. A lover of his native tongue might well tremble to think what this would have become, if all the innumerable vocables introduced or endorsed by illustrious names, had been admitted to a free course among us on the strength of their recommendation; if 'torve' and 'tetric' (Fuller), 'cecity' (Hooker), 'fastide' and 'trutinate' (*State Papers*), 'immanity' (Shakespeare), 'insulse' and 'insulsity' (Milton, prose), 'scelestick' (Feltham), 'splendidious' (Drayton), 'pervicacy' (Baxter), 'stramineous,' 'ardelion' (Burton), 'lepid,' 'sufflaminate'

(Barrow), 'facinorous' (Donne), 'immorigerous,' 'clancular,' 'ferity,' 'ustulation,' 'stultiloquy,' 'lipothymy' (λειποθυμία), 'hyperaspist' (all in Jeremy Taylor), if 'mulierosity,' 'subsannation,' 'coaxation,' 'ludibundness,' 'delinition,' 'sanguinolency,' 'septemfluous,' 'medioxumous,' 'mirificent,' 'palmiferous' (all in Henry More), 'pauciloquy,' 'multiloquy' (Beaumont, *Psyche*); if 'dyscolous' (Foxe), 'ataraxy' (Allestree), 'moliminously' (Cudworth), 'luciferously,' 'meticulous,' 'lapidifical,' 'exenteration,' 'farraginous' (Sir Thomas Browne), 'immarcescible' (Bishop Hall), 'exility,' 'spinosity,' 'incolumity,' 'solertiousness,' 'lucripetous,' 'inopious,' 'eluctate,' 'eximious' (all in Hacket), 'arride' (ridiculed by Ben Jonson), with the hundreds of other births, as monstrous or more monstrous than are some of these, had not been rejected and disallowed by the true linguistic instincts of the national mind.

Many words too *were* actually adopted, but not precisely as they had been first introduced among us. They were compelled to drop their foreign termination, or whatever else designated them as strangers, to conform themselves to English ways, and only thus were finally incorporated into the great family of English.* Thus of Greek words take the following: 'pyramis' and 'pyramides,'

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* J. Grimm (*Wörterbuch*, p. xxvi.): Fällt von ungefähr ein fremdes wort in den brunnen einer sprache, so wird es so lange darin umgetrieben, bis es ihre farbe annimmt, und seiner fremden art zum trotze wie ein heimisches aussieht.

forms often employed by Shakespeare ('pyramises' in Jeremy Taylor), became 'pyramid' and 'pyramids;' 'dosis' (Bacon) 'dose;' 'distichon' 'distich' (Holland), 'aristocratia' and 'democratia' (the same) 'aristocracy' and 'democracy;' 'hemistichion' (North) 'hemistich;' 'apogæon' (Fairfax) or 'apogeum' (Browne) 'apogee;' 'sumphonia' (Lodge) 'symphony;' 'myrrha' (Golding) 'myrrh;' 'prototypon' (Jackson) 'prototype;' 'synonymon' (Jeremy Taylor) or 'synonymum' (Hacket), and 'synonyma' (Milton, prose), became severally 'synonym' and 'synonyms;' 'parallelon' (North) 'parallel;' 'syntaxis' (Fuller) became 'syntax;' 'extasis' (Burton) 'ecstasy;' 'parallelogrammon' (Holland) 'parallelogram;' 'programma' (Warton) 'program;' 'epitheton' (Cowell) 'epithet;' 'epocha' (South) 'epoch;' 'disenteria' and 'epilepsis' (both in Sylvester) 'dysentery' and 'epilepsy;' 'biographia' (Dryden) 'biography;' 'apostata' (Massinger) 'apostate;' 'despota' (Fox) 'despot;' 'misanthropos' (Shakespeare, cf. 'misanthropi,' Bacon) 'misanthrope;' 'psalterion' (North) 'psaltery;' 'chasma' (Henry More) 'chasm;' 'idioma' and 'prosodia' (both in Daniel, prose) 'idiom' and 'prosody;' 'energia' (Sidney) 'energy,' 'Sibylla' (Bacon) 'Sibyl;' 'zoophyton' (Henry More) 'zoophyte;' 'enthousiasmos' (Sylvester) 'enthusiasm;' 'phantasma' (Shakespeare) 'phantasm;' 'paraphrasis' (Ascham) 'paraphrase;' 'magnes' (Gabriel Harvey) 'magnet;' 'cynosura' (Donne) 'cynosure;' 'galaxias' (Fox)

'galaxy;' 'heros' (Henry More) 'hero;' 'epitaphy' (Hawes) 'epitaph.'

The same process has gone on in a multitude of Latin words, which testify by their terminations that they were, and were felt to be, Latin at their first employment; though now they are such no longer. Thus Bacon uses generally, I know not whether always, 'insecta' for 'insects;' 'æquinoctia' for 'equinoxes;' and 'chylus' for 'chyle;' Latimer 'aspis' and 'basiliscus' for 'asp' and 'basilisk;' Frith 'syllogismus' for 'syllogism;' Bishop Andrews 'nardus' for 'nard;' Milton 'asphaltus' for 'asphalt;' Spenser 'zephyrus,' and not 'zephyr.' So too 'dactylus' (Ascham) preceded 'dactyle;' 'interstitium' (Fuller) 'interstice;' 'philtrum' (Culverwell) 'philtre;' 'expansum' (Jeremy Taylor) 'expanse;' 'preludium' (Beaumont, *Psyche*), 'prelude;' 'precipitium' (Coryat) 'precipice;' 'aconitum' (Shakespeare) 'aconite;' 'balsamum' (Shakespeare) 'balsam;' 'idyllium' (Dryden) 'idyl;' 'heliotropium' (Holland) 'heliotrope;' 'helleborum' (North) 'hellebore;' 'vehiculum' (Howe) 'vehicle;' 'trochæus' and 'spondæus' (Holland) 'trochee' and 'spondee;' 'transitus' (Howe) 'transit;' and 'machina' (Henry More) 'machine.' 'Grecia,' 'Palestina,' and 'Tyrus,' are all in our Authorized Version. We meet 'intervalla,' not 'intervals,' in Chillingworth; 'postulata,' not 'postulates,' in Swift; 'archiva,' not 'archives,' in Baxter; 'adulti,' not 'adults,' in Rogers; 'demagogi,' not 'demagogues,' in Hacket; 'elegi,'

not 'elegies,' in Holland; 'vestigium,' not 'vestige,' in Culverwell; 'pantomimus' in Lord Bacon and Ben Jonson for 'pantomime;' 'mystagogus' for 'mystagogue,' in Jackson and Henry More: 'atomi' in Lord Brooke for 'atoms.' In like manner, 'ædilis' (North) went before 'ædile;' 'effigies' and 'statua' (both in Shakespeare) before 'effigy' and 'statue;' 'abyssus' (Jackson) before 'abyss;' 'postscripta' (*State Papers*) before 'postscript;' 'commentarius' (Chapman) before 'commentary;' 'vestibulum' (Howe) before 'vestibule;' 'symbolum' (Hammond) before 'symbol;' 'spectrum' (Burton) before 'spectre;' while only after a while 'quære' gave place to 'query;' 'audite' (Hacket) to 'audit;' 'plaudite' (Henry More) to 'plaudit;' 'remanent' (*Paston Letters*) to 'remnant;' and the low Latin 'mummia' (Webster) became 'mummy.' The change of 'innocency,' 'indolency,' 'temperancy,' and the large family of words with the same termination, into 'innocence,' 'indolence, 'temperance,' and the like, is part of the same process of completed naturalization.

The plural very often tells the secret of the foreign light in which a word is still regarded, when the singular, being less capable of modification, fails to do this. Thus when Holland writes 'phalanges,' 'bisontes,' 'archontes,' 'sphinges,' 'ideæ,' it is clear that 'phalanx,' 'bison,' 'archon,' 'sphinx,' 'idea,' were still Greek words for him; as was 'rhinoceros' for Purchas, when he wrote

'rhinocerotes' for the plural; and 'dogma' for Hammond, when he made the plural not 'dogmas,' but 'dogmata.'* In the same way Spenser using 'heroës' as a trisyllable, plainly implies that it is not yet thoroughly English for him;† indeed, as we have just seen, the word in the singular was 'heros' to a considerably later date. 'Cento' is no English word, but a Latin one used in English, so long as the plural is not 'centos,' but 'centones,' as in the old anonymous translation of Augustin's *City of God*; and 'specimen,' so long as it owns the plural 'specimina' (Howe). Pope employing 'satellites' as a quadrisyllable—

> 'Why Jove's *satellites* are less than Jove'—

dealt with the word as a Latin one; just as 'terminus,' which the necessities of railways have introduced among us, will not be truly naturalized till it has 'terminuses,' and not 'termini' for a plural; nor 'phenomenon,' till we have renounced 'phenomena;' nor 'crisis,' while it makes 'crises.' Sometimes both plurals have been retained with only the assignment of different meanings to

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* Have we here an explanation of the 'battalia' of Jeremy Taylor and others? Did they, without reflecting on the matter, regard 'battalion' as a word with a Greek neuter termination? It is difficult to think they should have done so; yet more difficult to suggest any other explanation.

† 'And old *heroës*, which their world did daunt.'
Sonnet on Scanderbeg.

them, as is the case with 'indices' and 'indexes,' with 'genii' and 'geniuses.'

The same process has gone on with words from other languages, as from the Italian and the Spanish; thus 'bandetto' (Shakespeare), or 'bandito' (Jeremy Taylor), becomes 'bandit;' 'ruffiano' (Coryat) 'ruffian;' 'concerto' 'concert;' 'busto' (Lord Chesterfield) 'bust;' 'caricatura' (Sir Thomas Browne) 'caricature;' 'princessa' (Hacket) 'princess;' 'scaramucha' (Dryden) 'scaramouch;' 'pedante' (Bacon) 'pedant;' 'pedanteria' (Sidney) 'pedantry;' 'impresa' 'impress;' 'caprichio' (Shakespeare) becomes first 'caprich' (Butler), then 'caprice;' 'duello' (Shakespeare) 'duel;' 'alligarta' (Ben Jonson) 'alligator;' 'parroquito' (Webster) 'parroquet;' 'scalada' (Heylin) or 'escalado' (Holland) 'escalade;' 'granada' (Hacket) 'grenade;' 'parada' (Jeremy Taylor) 'parade;' 'emboscado' (Holland), 'stoccado,' 'barricado,' 'renegado,' 'hurricano' (all in Shakespeare), 'brocado' (Hackluyt), 'palissado' (Howell), these all drop their foreign terminations, and severally become 'ambuscade,' 'stockade,' 'barricade,' 'renegade,' 'hurricane,' 'brocade,' 'palisade;' 'croisado' (Bacon) in like manner becomes first 'croisade' (Jortin), and then 'crusade;' 'quinaquina' or 'quinquina,' 'quinine.' Other modifications of spelling, not always in the termination, but in the body of a word, will indicate its more entire incorporation into the English language. Thus 'shash,' a Turkish word, becomes 'sash;' 'tulippa' (Bacon) 'tulip;' 'quelques choses,'

'kickshaws;' 'restoration' was at first spelt 'rest*au*ration;' and so long as 'vicinage' was spelt 'voisinage'* (Sanderson), 'mirror' 'miroir' (Fuller), 'recoil' 'recule,' 'voyage' 'viage,' 'career' 'carriere' (all by Holland), they could scarcely be considered those thoroughly English words which now they are.†

Here and there even at this later period awkward foreign words will have been recast in a more thoroughly English mould; 'chirurgeon' will become 'surgeon;' 'hemorrhoid' 'emerod;' 'squinancy,' first 'squinzey' (Jeremy Taylor), and then 'quinsey;' 'porkpisce' (Spenser), or hogfish, will be 'porpesse,' and then 'porpoise,' as now. Yet the attempt will not always be successful. 'Physiognomy' will not give place to 'visnomy,' though Spenser and Shakespeare employ this familiar form; nor 'hippopotamus' to 'hippodame' at Spenser's bidding; nor 'avant-courier' to 'van-currier' at Shakespeare's. Other words also have finally refused to take a more popular shape, although such was current once. Chaucer wrote 'sawtrie,' but we 'psaltery;' Holland 'cirque,' revived by Keats, but we 'circus;' 'cense,' but we 'census;' 'interreign,' but we 'interregnum;' Sylvester 'cest,' but we 'cestus;' 'quirry,' but

* Skinner (*Etymologicon*, 1671) protests against the word altogether, as purely French, and having no right to be considered English at all.

† It is curious how effectually the nationality of a word may by these slight changes in spelling be disguised. I have met an excellent French and English scholar, to whom it was a surprise to learn that 'redingote' was 'riding-coat.'

we 'equerry;' 'colosse' (so also Henry More), but we 'colossus;' Golding 'ure,' but we 'urus;' 'metropole,' but we 'metropolis;' Dampier 'volcan,' but this has not superseded 'volcano;' nor 'pagod' (Pope) 'pagoda;' nor 'skelet' (Holland) 'skeleton;' nor 'stimule' (Stubbs) 'stimulus.' Bolingbroke wrote 'exode,' but we hold fast to 'exodus;' Burton 'funge,' but we 'fungus;' Henry More 'enigm,' but we 'enigma;' and 'analyse,' but we 'analysis.' 'Superfice' (Dryden) has not put 'superficies,' nor 'sacrary' (Hacket) 'sacrarium,' nor 'limbeck' 'alembic,' out of use. Chaucer's 'potecary' has given way to a more Greek formation, 'apothecary.' Yet these are exceptions; the set of language is all the other way.

Looking at this process of the reception of foreign words, with their after assimilation in feature to our own, we may trace a certain conformity between the genius of our institutions and that of our language. It is the very character of our institutions to repel none, but rather to afford a shelter and a refuge to all, from whatever quarter they come; and after a longer or shorter while all the strangers and incomers have been incorporated into the English nation, within one or two generations have forgotten that they were ever extraneous to it, have retained no other reminiscence of their foreign extraction than some slight difference of name, and that often disappearing or having disappeared. Exactly so has it been with the English language. No language

has shown itself less exclusive; none has stood less upon niceties; none has thrown open its doors wider, with a fuller confidence that it could make truly its own, assimilate and subdue to itself, whatever it received into its bosom; and in none has this confidence been more fully justified by the result.

Such are the two great augmentations from without of our vocabulary. All other are minor and subordinate. Thus the Italian influence has been far greater on our literature than on our language. In Chaucer it makes itself very strongly felt on the former,* but very slightly upon the latter; and, as compared with that of French, it may be counted as none at all. And this remained very much the condition of things for the whole period during which the star of Italy was in the ascendant here. When we consider how potent its influences were, and how long they lasted, it is only surprising that the deposit left in the language has not been greater. There was a time when Italian was far more read in England, and Italian books far more frequently translated, than they are at this present. Thus Ascham complains in his *Schoolmaster* of the immense number of wicked Italian books, such as those of the 'poisonous Italian ribald,' Aretine, which were rendered into English; and it is not less

* See Kessner, *Chaucer in seinen Beziehungen zur Italienischen Literatur*, Bonn, 1867.

abundantly evident that for a period extending from the reign of Henry the Eighth to the end of that of Elizabeth, it more concerned an accomplished courtier and man of the world to be familiar with Italian than with French.

Almost every page of Spenser bears witness to his intimate acquaintance with Ariosto, and with his own contemporary, Tasso. His sonnets are 'Amoretti.' In the choice of names for persons in his *Fairy Queen*, such as Orgoglio, Archimago, Braggadocchio, Malbecco, Gardante, Parlante, Jocante, Dispetto, Difetto, Speranza, Humiltà, and the like, he assumes the same familiarity with the language of Italy on the part of his readers. He introduces words purely Italian, as 'basciomani' (handkissings), 'capuccio' (hood), or only not Italian, because clipped of their final letter, as 'maltalent' for ill will, 'intendiment' for understanding, 'forniment' for furniture; or words only intelligible when referred to their Italian source, as 'affret' (= encounter), from 'affrettare,' 'to affrap' from the Italian 'affrappare;' or words employed not in our sense, but altogether in an Italian, as 'to revolt' in that of 'rivoltare' (*F. Q.* iii. 11, 25).

Milton in his prose works mentions frequently the peculiar love to the Italian literature and language which he bore, so that, next to those of Greece and of Rome, he was most addicted to these. And his poetry without such declarations would itself attest the same. He too calls his poems by Italian names, 'L'Allegro,' 'Il Pense-

roso.' His diction is enriched with Italian words, as 'gonfalon,' 'libecchio,' or with words formed on Italian models, as 'to imparadise,' which beautiful word, however, was not of his invention; he employs words in their Italian, not their English acceptation; thus 'to assassinate,' in the sense not of to kill, but grievously to maltreat. His use of 'adorn' as equivalent to 'adorned,' he must have justified by the Italian 'adorno.' His orthography, departing from the usual, approximates to the Italian; thus he writes 'ammiral' (ammiraglio) for admiral, 'haralt' (araldo) for herald, 'gonfalon' for gonfanon, 'sovran' (sovrano) for sovereign. 'Soldan,' instead of 'sultan,' he has in common with others who went before him; and in like manner 'to 'sdeign' for to disdain, a usage seemingly suggested by the Italian 'sdegnare.'

Jeremy Taylor's acquaintance with Italian and his assumption of the same acquaintance on the part of his readers is testified by his frequent use of Italian proverbs and Italian words. He sometimes clothes these in an English dress, as 'to picqueer' in the sense of to skirmish; but oftener leaves them in their own. It would not be hard to gather out of his writings a considerable collection of these; such as 'amorevolezza,' 'sollevamento,' 'avisamente,' 'incurabili' (can it be that 'incurables' was in his time wanting in our language?); while, scattered up and down our literature of the first half of the seventeenth century, we meet other Italian words not a few;

'amorevolous' for instance, and 'bugiard' (=liar) both in Hacket, 'leggiadrous,' in Beaumont's *Psyche* and elsewhere. A list, as complete as I could make it, of such as have finally found a place in the language I have given in my first lecture (see p. 16); they are not much fewer than a hundred, and I cannot suppose but that some have escaped me.

The introduction of French tastes by Charles the Second and his courtiers returning from exile, rather modified the structure of our sentences than seriously affected our vocabulary; yet it gave us some new words. In one of Dryden's plays, *Marriage à la Mode*, a lady shows her affectation by constantly employing French idioms in preference to English, French words rather than native. Curiously enough, of these, thus put into her mouth to render her ridiculous, several, as 'repartee,' 'grimace,' 'chagrin,' to be in a person's 'good graces,' are excellent English now, and have nothing far-sought or affected about them: for so it frequently proves that what is laughed at in the beginning, is by all admitted and allowed at the last. 'Fougue' and 'fraischeur,' which Dryden himself employed—being it is true, a very rare offender in this way—have not been justified by the same success.

Nor indeed can it be said that this adoption and naturalization of foreign words has ever wholly ceased. There are periods, as we have seen, when a language throws open its doors, and welcomes strangers with an especial freedom; but there is

never a time, when one by one these foreigners and strangers are not slipping into it. The process by which they do this eludes for the most part our observation. Time, the greatest of all innovators, manages his innovations so dexterously, spreads them over such vast periods, and therefore brings them about so gradually, that often, while effecting the mightiest changes, we have no suspicion that he is effecting any at all. Thus how nearly imperceptible are the steps by which a foreign word is admitted into the full rights of an English one. Many Greek words, for example, quite unchanged in form, have in one way or another ended in obtaining a home and acceptance among us. We may in almost every instance trace step by step the stealthy naturalization of these. We may note them spelt for a while in Greek letters, and avowedly employed as Greek and not English vocables. Having thus won a certain allowance, and become not altogether unfamiliar, we note them next exchanging Greek for English letters, and finally obtaining recognition as words which, however drawn from a foreign source, are yet themselves English. Thus 'acme,' 'apotheosis,' 'euthanasia,' 'iota,' 'criterion,' 'axiom,' 'chrysalis,' 'dogma,' 'encyclopedia,' 'metropolis,' 'ophthalmia,' 'phenomena,' 'pathos,' are all English now, while yet South with many others always wrote *ἀκμή*, Jeremy Taylor *ἀποθέωσις*, *εὐθανασία*, *ἰῶτα*, *κριτήριον*, and *ἀξιώματα*, Henry More *χρυσαλίς*, Hammond speaks of *δόγματα*, Ben Jonson of 'the knowledge of the liberal arts, which the Greeks call

ἐγκυκλοπαιδείαν,'* Culverwell wrote μητρόπολις and ὀφθαλμία, Preston φαινόμενα—Sylvester ascribes to Baxter not 'pathos,' but πάθος.† Ἦθος is at the present moment preparing for this passage from Greek characters to English, and certainly before long will be acknowledged as English. The only cause which for some time past has stood in the way of this is the misgiving whether it will not be read 'ĕthos,' and not 'ēthos,' and thus not be the word intended.

Let us trace a like process in some French word, which is at this moment gaining a footing among us. For 'prestige' we have manifestly no equivalent of our own. It expresses something which only by a long circumlocution we could express; namely, that magic influence on others, which past successes, as the pledge and promise of future ones, breed. It has thus naturally passed into frequent use. Good English writers have not felt that in employing it they were slighting as good a word of their own. At first all used it avowedly as French, writing it in italics to indicate this. Some write it so still, others do not; some, that is, regard it still as foreign, others consider that it

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* He is not perfectly accurate here; the Greeks spoke of ἐν κύκλῳ παιδεία and ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία, but had no such compound word as ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία. We gather, however, from his statement, as from Lord Bacon's use of 'circle-learning' (= 'orbis doctrinæ,' Quintilian), that 'encyclopædia' did not exist in their time.

† See the passages quoted in my paper, *On some Deficiencies in our English Dictionaries*, p. 38, published separately and in the *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 1857.

has obtained a settlement among us.* Little by little the number of those who write it in italics will diminish; and finally none will do so. It will then only need that the accent be shifted, in conformity to the instinct of all English words, as far back as it will go, that for 'prestíge,' it should be pronounced 'préstige,' even as within these few years for 'depót' we have learned to say 'dépot,' and its naturalization will be complete. I have no doubt that before many years it will be so pronounced by the majority of educated Englishmen, —some pronounce it so already,—and that the pronunciation common now will pass away, just as 'obl*ee*ge,' once universal, has everywhere given place to 'obl*i*ge.'†

I observe in passing, that the process of throwing the accent of a word back, by way of completing its naturalization, is one which has been constantly going forward among us. In the time and writings of Chaucer there was much vacillation in the placing of the accent; as was to be expected, while the French adoptions were comparatively recent,

* We trace a similar progress in Greek words which were being incorporated in the Latin. Thus Cicero writes ἀντίποδες (*Acad.* ii. 39, 123), but Seneca (*Ep.* 122), 'antipodes;' that is, the word for Cicero was still Greek, while in the period that elapsed between him and Seneca, it had become Latin; so too Cicero writes εἴδωλον, the Younger Pliny 'idolon,' and Tertullian 'idolum;' Cicero στρατήγημα (*Nat. Deor.* 3. 6), but Valerius Maximus 'strategema.'

† See in Coleridge's *Table Talk*, p. 3, the amusing story of John Kemble's stately correction of the Prince of Wales for adhering to the earlier pronunciation, 'obl*ee*ge,'—'It will become your royal mouth better to say obl*i*ge.'

and had not yet unlearned their foreign ways or made themselves here perfectly at home. Some of his French words are still accented on the final syllable, thus 'honoúr,' 'creatúre,' 'senténce,' 'penánce,' 'beauté,' 'manére,' 'servíce;' others as 'trésour,' 'cólour,' 'cónseil,' on the first; while this vacillation displays itself still more markedly in the fact that the same word is accented by him sometimes on the one syllable, and sometimes upon the other; he writing at one time 'natúre' and at another 'náture,' at one time 'vertúe' and at another 'vértue.' We see this same tendency working to a far later day. These, 'preságe,' 'captíve,' 'envý,' 'trespáss,' 'forést,' in Spenser, and these, 'prostráte,' 'advérse,' 'aspéct,' 'procéss,' 'instínct,' 'insúlt,' 'impúlse,' 'pretéxt,' 'contríte,' 'upróar,' 'edíct,' 'contést,' in Milton, had all their accent on the last syllable; they have it now on the first; 'théatre' was 'theátre' with Sylvester; so that the American pronunciation is an archaism and not a vulgarism; while 'acádemy' was accented 'académy' by Cowley and Butler.* 'Próduce' was 'produce' with Dryden; 'éssay' was 'essáy' both with him and with Pope; he closes heroic lines with both these words; Pope does the same with 'barrier' † and 'effort;' therefore pronounced 'barríer,' 'effórt,' by him. We may note the same going forward

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* 'In this great *académy* of mankind.'
Butler, *To the Memory of Du Val.*

† 'Twixt that and reason what a nice *barrier*.'

at the present day. Middle-aged men may remember that it was a question in their youth whether it should be 'revénue' or 'révenue.' It is always 'révenue' now. Rogers bewailed the change which had taken place in his memory from 'balcóny' to 'bálcony.' 'Bálcony,' he complains, 'makes me sick;' but it has effectually won the day.

Or take an example of this progressive naturalization from another quarter. In an English glossary, of date 1671, I do not find 'tea,' but 'cha, the leaf of a tree in China, which being infused into water, serves for their ordinary drink.' Thirteen years later the word is no longer a Chinese one, but already a French one for us; Locke in his *Diary* writing it 'thé.' Early in the next century the word is spelt in an entirely English fashion, in fact as we spell it now, but still retains a foreign pronunciation,—Pope rhymes it with 'obey,'—and this it has only lately altogether let go.

There are other French words not a few, besides 'prestige' which I instanced just now, that are at this moment hovering on the confines of English, hardly knowing whether they shall become such altogether or not. Such are 'ennui,' 'exploitation,' 'verve,' 'persiflage,' 'badinage,' 'chicane,' 'finesse,' 'melée' (Tennyson already spells it 'mellay'), and others. All these are often employed by us,—and it is out of such frequent employment that adoption proceeds,—because expressing shades of meaning not expressed by any words of our own.

Some of them will no doubt complete their naturalization; others will after a time retreat again, like some which were named just now, and become for us once more avowedly French. 'Solidarity,' which we owe to the French Communists,—it signifies a fellowship in gain and loss, in honour and dishonour, in victory and defeat, a being, so to speak, all in the same bottom,—is so convenient that, unattractive as confessedly it is, it would be in vain to struggle against it. The newspapers already have, and books will not long exclude it; not to say that it has established itself in German, and in other European languages as well.

Greek and Latin words also we still continue to adopt, although now no longer in troops and companies, but only one by one. The lively interest which always has been felt in classical studies among us, and which will continue to be felt, so long as Englishmen present to themselves a high culture of their faculties and powers as an object of desire, so long as models of what is truest and fairest in art have any attraction for them, is itself a pledge that accessions from these quarters can never cease altogether. I refer not here to purely scientific terms; these, so long as they do not pass beyond the threshold of the science for whose use they were invented, have no proper right to be called words at all. They are a kind of shorthand of the science, or algebraic notation; and will find no place in a dictionary of the language constructed upon true principles, but will rather constitute a technical dictionary

by themselves. It is oftentimes, as I have observed elsewhere,* a barren ostentation which induces the drafting of these into a dictionary, that so there may be grounds for boasting of an immense addition made to the vocabulary. Such additions are very cheaply made. Nothing is easier than to turn to modern treatises on chemistry or electricity, or on some other of the sciences which hardly or not at all existed half a century ago, or which, if they existed, have yet been in later times wholly new-named—as botany, for example,—and to transplant new terms from these by the hundred and the thousand, with which to crowd and deform the pages of a dictionary; and then to boast of the vast increase of words which it has gained over its predecessors. The labour is little more than that of transcription, but the gain is nought; or indeed is less than nought; for it is not merely that half a dozen genuine English words recovered from our old authors would be a truer gain, a more real advance toward the completion of our vocabulary than a hundred or a thousand of these; but additions of this kind are mere disfigurements of the work which they profess to complete.

Of non-scientific words, both Greek and Latin, some have made their way among us quite in these latter times. 'Æsthetic' we have got indeed *through* the German, but *from* the Greek; while Tennyson has given allowance to 'æon;' both

* *On some Deficiencies in our English Dictionaries*, p. 57.

these, however, must renounce their initial diphthong, the English knowing no such composite letter, before they can be counted to be quite at home with us. 'Myth' is a deposit which wide and far-reaching controversies have left in the popular language. 'Photography' is a scientific word which has travelled beyond the limits of the science which gave it birth; and 'stereotype' another. This last was invented—not the thing, but the word,—by Didot not very long since; but is now absorbed into general circulation, being current in a secondary and figurative sense. 'Ornamentation' was a novelty when Ruskin gave it the sanction of his name; but it hardly seems so now. 'Pretentious,' 'normal,' and 'abnormal,' not quite so new, are yet of recent introduction into the language.

When we keep in mind the near affinity between English and German, which, if not sisters, are at any rate first cousins, it is remarkable that almost since the day when they parted company, each to fulfil its own destiny, there has been little further commerce, little giving or taking, between them. Adoptions on our part from the German have been extremely rare; 'crikesman' (kriegsmann) and 'brandschat' (brandschatz), with some other German words, common enough in the *State Papers* of the sixteenth century, having found no permanent place in the language. The explanation lies in the fact that the literary activity of Germany did not begin till very late, nor our interest in it till later still, not indeed till the beginning of the present

century. At the same time literature is not the only channel by which words pass from one language to another; thus 'plunder' was brought back from Germany about the beginning of our Civil War, by the soldiers who had served under Gustavus Adolphus and his captains; while 'trigger' ('tricker' in *Hudibras*), which reached us at the same time, and by the same channel, is manifestly the German 'drücker,' though none of our dictionaries have marked it as such. 'Iceberg' also we must have taken whole from the German, since, had we constructed a word for ourselves, we should have made it, not 'ice-*berg*,' but 'ice-*mountain*.' When we adopted it is a question; I have not met with it in our earlier voyagers. An English 'swindler' is not exactly a German 'schwindler;' yet a subaudition of the knave, though more latent in the German, is common to both; and we must have drawn the word from Germany (it is not in Johnson) late in the last century. If '*life*guard' was originally, as Richardson suggests, '*leib*garde,' or '*body*-guard,' and from that transformed, by the determination of Englishmen to make it significant in English, into '*life*-guard,' or guard defending the *life* of the sovereign, this will be another word from the same quarter. Yet I have my doubts; 'leibgarde' would scarcely have found its way hither before the accession of the House of Hanover, or at any rate before the arrival of William with his memorable guards; while 'life-guard,' in its present shape, is older in the

language; we hear often of the 'lifeguards' in our Civil Wars; and Fuller writes, 'The Cherethites were a kind of *lifegard* to king David.'*

Of late our importations from this quarter have been somewhat more numerous. With some German compound words we have been so well-pleased, that we must needs adopt them into English, or form words of our own on their model. We have not always been happy in those selected for imitation or adoption. Possessing 'manual,' we need not have called 'hand-book' back from an oblivion of nine hundred years. And now we are threatened with 'word-building;' while 'standpoint' has actually forced itself on the language. 'Einseitig' (itself modern, if I mistake not), is evidently the pattern on which we have formed 'onesided'—a word to which a few years ago something of affectation was attached; none using it save those who dealt more or less in German wares; it has however its manifest conveniences, and will hold its ground; so too, as it seems, will 'fatherland,' though a certain note of affectation cleaves to it still. The happiest of these compounded words, borrowed recently from the German, is 'folk-lore;' the substitution of this for popular superstitions, is an unquestionable gain.

There are other methods by which a language enlarges its vocabulary, but I must reserve till my next lecture to speak of these.

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* *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, 1650, p. 217.

LECTURE IV.

GAINS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

(CONTINUED).

TAKING up the subject where in my last lecture I left off, I proceed to enumerate some other sources from which we have made additions to our vocabulary. Of course the period when absolutely new roots are generated will have passed away very long indeed before men begin by a reflective act to take notice of processes going forward in the language which they speak. That pure productive energy, creative we might call it, belongs to times quite out of the ken of history. It is only from materials already existing that it can enrich itself in the later, or historical stages of its development.

This it can do in many ways. And first, it can bring words of its own into new combinations; it can combine two, or even more than two, of the words which it already has, and form a new one out of these. Much more is wanted here than merely to link words together by a hyphen; they must really coalesce and grow together. Different languages, and even the same language at different stages of its growth, will possess this power in very different degrees. The eminent felicity of the Greek in this respect has been always

acknowledged. 'The joints of her compounded words,' says Fuller, 'are so naturally oiled, that they run nimbly on the tongue, which makes them though long, never tedious, because significant.'* Sir Philip Sidney makes the same claim for our English, namely, that 'it is particularly happy in the composition of two or three words together, near equal to the Greek.' No one has done more than Milton to justify this praise, or to make manifest what may be effected by this happy marriage of words. Many of his compound epithets, as 'grey-hooded even,' 'coral-paven floor,' 'flowry-kirtled Naiades,' 'golden-winged host,' 'tinsel-slippered feet,' 'violet-embroidered vale,' 'dewy-feathered sleep,' 'vermeil-tinctured lip,'

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* *Holy State*, b. 2, c. 6. Latin promised at one time to display an almost equal freedom in forming new words by the happy marriage of old. But at the period of its highest culture it seemed possessed with a timidity, which caused it voluntarily to abdicate this with many of its own powers. In the Augustan period we look in vain for epithets like these, both occurring in a single line of Catullus: 'Ubi cerva *silvicultrix*, ubi aper *nemorivagus*;' or again, as his 'fluentisonus;' or as the 'imbricitor' of Ennius. Nay, of those compound epithets which the language once had formed, it let numbers drop: 'parcipromus,' 'turpilucricupidus,' and many more, do not extend beyond Plautus. Quintilian (i. 5. 70): Res tota magis Græcos decet, nobis minus succedit; nec id fieri naturâ puto, sed alienis favemus; ideoque cum *κυρταύχενα* mirati sumus, *incurvicervicum* vix, a risu defendimus. Elsewhere he complains of the little *generative* power of the Latin, its continual losses being compensated by no equivalent gains (viii. 6. 32): Deinde, tanquam consummata sint omnia, nihil generare audemus ipsi, quum multa quotidie ab antiquis ficta moriantur. Still the silver age of the language did recover to some extent the abdicated energies of its earlier times, reasserted among other powers that of combining words, with a certain measure of success.

are themselves poems in miniature. Not unworthy to be set beside these are Sylvester's 'opal-coloured morn,' Drayton's 'silver-sanded shore,' Marlowe's 'golden-fingered Ind,' Beaumont and Fletcher's 'golden-tressed Apollo.' At the same time combinations like these remain to so great a degree the peculiar property of the first author, they so little pass into any further use that they must rather be regarded as augmentations of its poetical wealth than its linguistic. Such words as 'international,' 'folk-lore,' instanced just now, are better examples of real additions to our vocabulary. 'International' we owe to Jeremy Bentham, one of the boldest and at the same time most unsuccessful among the coiners of new words. Yet strange and formless as is for the most part the progeny of his brain, he has given us here a word which does such frequent and excellent service, that it is difficult to understand how we could have managed so long to do without it.

Then too we have increased our stock of vocables by forming new words according to the analogy of formations which in parallel cases have been already allowed. Thus upon the substantives 'congregation,' 'convention,' were formed 'congregational,' 'conventional;' yet these at a comparatively modern date; 'congregational' first rising up in the Assembly of Divines, or during the time of the Commonwealth.* These having found allowance, the process is repeated,

* *Collection of Scarce Tracts*, edited by Sir W. Scott, vol. vii. p. 91.

not always with very gratifying results, in the case of other words with the same ending. We are now used to 'educational,' and the word is serviceable enough; but I can remember when a good many years ago an '*Educational* Magazine' was started, one's first impression was, that a work having to do with education should not thus bear upon its front an offensive, or at best a very dubious, novelty in the English language. These adjectives are now multiplying fast. We have 'inflexional,' 'seasonal,' 'denominational,' and on this, in dissenting magazines at least, the monstrous birth, 'denominationalism;' 'emotional' is creeping into books, 'sensational' has become a household word; so that it is hard to say whether all words with this termination will not finally generate an adjective. Convenient as you may sometimes find these, you will do well to abstain from all but the perfectly well recognized formations. For those who have no claim to be arbiters of the language Pope's advice is good, as certainly it is safe, that they be not among the last to use a word which is going out, nor among the first to employ one that is coming in.

Again, languages enrich themselves, our own has largely done so, by recovering treasures which they had lost for a while. Not that all which drops out of use and memory *is* loss; there are words which it is gain to be rid of, and none would wish to revive; words of which Dryden says truly, though in a somewhat ungracious comparison—they do 'not deserve this redemption,

any more than the crowds of men who daily die, or are slain for sixpence in a battle, merit to be restored to life, if a wish could revive them.'* But there are others which it is a real gain to draw back again from the temporary oblivion into which they had fallen, and such recoveries are more numerous than might at first be supposed.

You may remember that Horace, tracing in a few memorable lines the fortune of words, and noting that many, once current, had in his time disappeared, did not therefore count that of necessity their race was for ever run. So far from this, he confidently anticipated a *palingenesy* or new existence for many among them;† they had set, but they should rise again: what seemed death was only suspended animation. Such indeed is the fact. Words slip almost or quite as imperceptibly back into use as they once slipped from it. There is abundant evidence of this. In the contemporary gloss which an anonymous friend of Spenser's furnishes to his *Shepherd's Calendar*, first published in 1579, 'for the exposition of old words,' as he declares, he includes the following in his list: 'askance,' 'bevy,' 'coronal,' 'dapper,' 'embellish,' 'fain,' 'flowret,' 'forlorn,' 'forestall,' 'glee,' 'keen,' 'scathe,' 'seer,' 'surly,' 'welter,' 'wizard,' with others quite as familiar as these.

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* Postscript to his *Translation of the Æneid.* For Gray's judgment on the words recovered or recalled by Dryden see *Letter* 43, to West.

† Multa renascentur, quæ jam cecidere.

De A. P. 46—72; cf. *Ep.* 2. 2. 115.

'kaiser,' 'palmer,' 'paragon,' 'paramour,' 'paynim,' 'prowess,' 'trenchant,' 'welkin;' with all which our poetry is familiar now. Purver, writing in 1764, has an enormous list of words 'clownish, barbarous, base, hard, technical, misapplied,' which therefore he proposes to expel from our Bibles, and among them are 'beguile,' 'boisterous,' 'lineage,' 'perseverance,' 'potentate,' 'resent,' 'seduce,' 'shorn,' 'swerve,' 'vigilant,' 'unction,' 'unloose,' 'vocation.' Who would now affirm of the verb 'to hallow' that it is even obsolescent? yet Wallis two hundred years ago observed—'it has almost gone out of use' (fere desuevit). It would be difficult to find an example of the verb, 'to advocate,' between Milton and Burke. Franklin, an admirable master of the homelier English style, considered the word to have sprung up during his own residence in Europe. In this indeed he was mistaken; it had only during this period revived. Johnson says of 'jeopardy' that it is a 'word not now in use;' which certainly is not any longer true.*

I am persuaded that in facility of being understood, Chaucer is not merely as near, but much nearer, to us than he was felt by Dryden and his contemporaries to be to them. They make exactly

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In Speght's *Chaucer* (1667), there is a long list of 'old and obscure words in Chaucer explained;' these 'old and obscure words' including 'anthem,' 'blithe,' 'bland,' 'chaplet,' 'carol,' 'deluge,' 'franchise,' 'illusion,' 'problem,' 'recreant,' 'sphere,' 'tissue,' 'transcend,' with very many easier than these. In Skinner's *Etymologicon* (1671), there is another such list of words which have gone out of use,* and among these he includes 'to dovetail,' 'to interlace,' 'elvish,' 'encumbred,' 'phantom,' 'gawd,' 'glare,' 'malison,' 'masquerade' (mascarade), 'oriental,' 'plumage,' 'pummel' (pomell), 'shapely.' Again, there is prefixed to Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, in which, as is well known, he affects the antique, an 'explanation of the obsolete words used in this poem.' They are not very many, but they include 'appal,' 'aye,' 'bale,' 'blazon,' 'carol,' 'deftly,' 'gear,' 'glee,' 'imp,' 'nursling,' 'prankt,' 'sere,' 'sheen,' 'sweltry,' 'thrall,' 'unkempt,' 'wight;' many of which would be used without scruple in the prose, the remainder belonging to the recognized poetical diction, of the present day. West, a contemporary of Thomson, whose works have found their way into *Johnson's Poets*, and who supposed, like Thomson, that he was writing 'in the manner of Spenser,' counts it necessary to explain 'assay,' 'astound,' 'caitiff,' 'dight,' 'emprise,' 'guise,'

* *Etymologicon vocum omnium antiquarum quæ usque a Wilhelmo Victore invaluerunt, et jam ante parentum ætatem in usu esse desierunt.*

'kaiser,' 'palmer,' 'paragon,' 'paramour,' 'paynim,' 'prowess,' 'trenchant,' 'welkin;' with all which our poetry is familiar now. Purver, writing in 1764, has an enormous list of words 'clownish, barbarous, base, hard, technical, misapplied,' which therefore he proposes to expel from our Bibles, and among them are 'beguile,' 'boisterous,' 'lineage,' 'perseverance,' 'potentate,' 'resent,' 'seduce,' 'shorn,' 'swerve,' 'vigilant,' 'unction,' 'unloose,' 'vocation.' Who would now affirm of the verb 'to hallow' that it is even obsolescent? yet Wallis two hundred years ago observed—'it has almost gone out of use' (fere desuevit). It would be difficult to find an example of the verb, 'to advocate,' between Milton and Burke. Franklin, an admirable master of the homelier English style, considered the word to have sprung up during his own residence in Europe. In this indeed he was mistaken; it had only during this period revived. Johnson says of 'jeopardy' that it is a 'word not now in use;' which certainly is not any longer true.*

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the same sort of complaints, only in still stronger language, about his archaic phraseology and the obscurities which it involves, which we still sometimes hear at the present day. Thus in the *Preface* to his *Tales from Chaucer*, having quoted some not very difficult lines from the earlier poet whom he was modernizing, he proceeds: 'You have here a specimen of Chaucer's language, which is so obsolete that his sense is scarce to be understood.'* Nor did it fare thus with Chaucer only. These wits and poets of the Court of Charles the Second were conscious of a greater gulf between themselves and the Elizabethan æra, separated from them by little more than fifty years, than any of which *we* are aware, separated from it by two centuries more. It was not merely that they felt themselves more removed from its tone and spirit; their altered circumstances might explain this;† but I am convinced that they found

* But for all this Dryden thought him worth understanding. Not so Addison. In a rapid review of English poets he accounts 'the merry bard'—this is his characteristic epithet for the most pathetic poet in the language—as one the whole significance of whose antiquated verse has for ever past away:

> 'But age has rusted what the poet writ,
> Worn out his language, and obscured his wit.
> In vain he jests in his unpolished strain,
> And tries to make his readers laugh in vain.'

† Addison takes credit for this inability of his own age to find any satisfaction in that which Spenser sung for the delight of his:

> 'But now the mystic tale, that pleased of yore,
> Can charm our understanding age no more;
> The long-spun allegories fulsome grow,
> While the dull moral lies too plain below.'

more difficulty and strangeness in the language of Spenser and Shakespeare than we find now; that it sounded more uncouth, more old-fashioned, more crowded with obsolete terms than it does in our ears at the present. Only so can one explain the tone in which they are accustomed to speak of these worthies of the near past. I must again cite Dryden, the truest representative for good and for evil of literary England during the later decades of the seventeenth century. Of Spenser, whose death was separated from his own birth by little more than thirty years, he speaks as of one belonging to quite a different epoch, counting it much to say, 'notwithstanding his obsolete language, he is still intelligible.'* Nay, hear his judgment of Shakespeare himself, so far as language is concerned: 'It must be allowed to the present age that the tongue in general is so much refined since Shakespeare's time, that many of his words and more of his phrases are scarce intelligible. And of those which we understand, some are ungrammatical, others coarse; and his whole style is so pestered with figurative expressions, that it is as affected as it is obscure.'†

Sometimes a word emerges from the lower strata of society, not indeed new, but yet to most seeming

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* *Preface to Juvenal.*

† *Preface to Troilus and Cressida.* In justice to Dryden, and lest he should seem to speak poetic blasphemy, it should not be forgotten that 'pestered' had in his time no such offensive a sense as it has now. It meant no more than inconveniently crowded. See my *Select Glossary*, s. v.

new, its very existence having been forgotten by the larger number of those speaking the language; although it must have somewhere lived on upon the lips of men. Thus, since the gold fields of California and Australia have been opened, we hear often of a 'nugget' of gold; being a lump of the pure metal; and it has been debated whether the word is a new birth altogether, or a popular recasting of 'ingot.' It is most probably this last; and yet scarcely a recent one, framed for the present need, seeing that 'nugget,' or 'niggot' as it is spelt by them, occurs in our elder writers.* There can be little doubt of the identity of 'niggot' and 'nugget'; all the consonants, the *stamina* of a word, being the same; whilst that earlier form makes plausible the suggestion that 'nugget' is only 'ingot' disguised, since it wants nothing but the very common transposition of the first two letters to complete their identity.

New words are often formed out of the names of persons, actual or mythical. A collection in any language of all the names of *persons* which have afterwards become names of *things*, from 'nomina *appellativa*' have become 'nomina *realia*,' would be very curious and interesting. I

* Thus in North's *Plutarch*, p. 499: 'After the fire was quenched, they found in *niggots* of gold and silver mingled together, about a thousand talents;' and again, p. 323: 'There was brought a marvellous great mass of treasure in *niggots* of gold.' The word has not found its way into our dictionaries or glossaries.

will enumerate some of the words which we have this way gotten. To begin with mythical antiquity—the Chimæra has given us 'chimerical,' Hermes 'hermetic,' Tantalus 'to tantalize,' Hercules 'herculean,' Proteus 'protean,' Vulcan 'volcano' and 'volcanic,' and Dædalus 'dedal,' if this word may on Spenser's and Shelley's authority be allowed. Gordius, the Phrygian king who tied that famous 'gordian' knot which Alexander cut, will supply a natural transition from mythical to historical. Here Mausolus, a king of Caria, has left us 'mausoleum,' Academus 'academy,' Epicurus 'epicure,' Philip of Macedon a 'philippic,' being such a discourse as Demosthenes once launched against the enemy of Greece, and Cicero 'cicerone.' Mithridates, who had made himself poison-proof, gave us the now forgotten word 'mithridate,' for antidote; as from Hippocrates we derived 'hipocras,' or 'ypocras,' often occurring in our early poets, being a wine supposed to be mingled after his receipt. Gentius, a king of Illyria, gave his name to the plant 'gentian,' having been, it is said, the first to discover its virtues. A grammar used to be called a 'donat' or 'donet' (Chaucer), from Donatus, a famous grammarian; just as at the present day one hears in Switzerland and Germany every guide-book called a 'Bädeker.' Lazarus, perhaps an historical person, has given us 'lazar' and 'lazaretto;' Veronica and the legend connected with her name, a 'vernicle,' being a napkin with the Saviour's head portrayed on it. Our 'pantaloons' are from St. Pantaleone; he

was the patron saint of the Venetians, who therefore very commonly received Pantaleon as their Christian name; it was from them transferred to a garment which they affected. Simon Magus gave us 'simony;' Mahomet a 'mammet' or 'maumet,' and 'mammetry' or idolatry; 'dunce' is from Duns Scotus, and gives us a wonderful glimpse of the scorn in which at the revival of learning the Schoolmen were held; while there is a legend that the 'knot' or sand-piper is named from Canute or Knute, with whom this bird was a special favourite. To come to more modern times, and not pausing at Ben Jonson's 'chaucerisms,' Bishop Hall's 'scoganisms,' from Scogan, Edward the Fourth's jester, or his 'aretinisms,' from an infamous writer, named in my lecture preceding; these being probably not intended even by their authors to endure; a Roman cobbler named Pasquin has given us the 'pasquil' or 'pasquinade;' 'patch,' a name of contempt, not unfrequent in Shakespeare, is said to have been the proper name of a favourite fool of Cardinal Wolsey's; and Colonel Negus in Queen Anne's time to have first mixed the beverage which goes by his name. Lord Orrery was the first for whom an 'orrery' was constructed; and Lord Spencer first wore, or first brought into fashion, a 'spencer.' Dahl, a Swede, introduced the cultivation of the 'dahlia;' the 'fuchsia' is named after Fuchs, a German botanist of the sixteenth century; the 'magnolia' after Magnol, a distinguished French botanist of the beginning

of the eighteenth century; the 'camelia' was introduced into Europe in 1731 by Camel, one of the Moravian Brethren. Tabinet, a French Protestant refugee, was the first to make 'tabinet' in Dublin; in '*tram*-road,' the second syllable of the name of Ou*tram*, the inventor, survives. The 'tontine' was conceived by Tonti, an Italian; another Italian, Galvani, first noted the phenomena of animal electricity or 'galvanism;' while a third, Volta, gave a name to the 'voltaic' battery. 'Nicotine,' the poison recently drawn from tobacco, goes back for its name to Nicot, who first introduced the tobacco-plant to the notice of Europe. 'Martinet,' 'mackintosh,' 'doyly,' 'brougham,' 'to macadamize,' 'to burke,' are all names of persons or formed from persons, and then transferred to things, on the score of some sort of connection between the one and the other.*

* Several such words we have in common with the French. Of their own they have 'sardanapalisme,' any piece of profuse luxury, from Sardanapalus; for 'lambiner,' to dally or loiter over a task, they are indebted to Denis Lambin, a worthy Greek scholar of the sixteenth century, but accused of sluggish movement and wearisome diffuseness in style. Every reader of Pascal's *Provincial Letters* will remember Escobar, the great casuist of the Jesuits, whose convenient subterfuges for the relaxation of the moral law have there been made famous. To the notoriety which he thus acquired, he owes his introduction into the French languge; where 'escobarder' is used in the sense of to equivocate, and 'escobarderie' of subterfuge or equivocation. A pale green colour is in French called 'céladon' from a personage of this name, of a feeble and *fade* tenderness, who figures in *Astrée*, a popular romance of the seventeenth century. An unpopular minister of finance, M. de Silhouette, unpopular because he sought to cut down unnecessary expenses

Again, the names of popular characters in literature give birth to new words. Thus from Homer we have 'mentor' for a monitor; 'stentorian' for loud-voiced; and inasmuch as with all of Hector's nobleness there is a certain amount of big talk about him, he has given us 'to hector;'* while the medieval romances about the siege of Troy ascribe to Pandarus that shameful ministry out of which his name has passed into the words 'to pandar' and 'pandarism.' 'Rodomontade' is from Rodomonte, a blustering and boasting hero of Boiardo, adopted by Ariosto, but by him changed into Rodamonte; 'thrasonical,' from Thraso, the braggart of the Roman comedy. Cervantes has given us 'quixotic;' Swift 'lilliputian;' to Molière the French language owes 'tartuffe' and 'tartufferie.' 'Reynard' with us is a duplicate for fox, while in French 'renard' has quite excluded the old 'volpils,' being originally no more than the proper name of the fox-hero, the vulpine Ulysses, in that famous beast-epic of the middle ages, *Reineke Fuchs*; the immense popularity of

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in the State, lent his name to the slight and thus cheap black outline portrait called a 'silhouette' (Sismondi, *Hist. des Français*, vol. xix. pp. 94, 95). In the 'mansarde' roof we have the name of Mansart, the architect who introduced it. In 'marivaudage' the name of Marivaux is bound up, who was noted for the affected euphuism which goes by this name. The point of contact between the 'fiacre' and St. Fiacre is well known. Hackney carriages when first established in Paris waited for their hiring in the court of an hotel which was adorned with an image of the Scottish saint. I need hardly add 'guillotine.'

* See Col. Mure, *Language and Literature of Ancient Greece*, vol. i. p. 350.

which we gather from many evidences, from none more clearly than from this. 'Chanticleer' is the name of the cock, and 'Bruin' of the bear in the same poem.* These have not made fortune to the same extent of actually putting out of use names which before existed, but still have become quite familiar to us all.

There is another very fruitful source of increase in the vocabulary of a language. What was once one word splits into two, takes two forms, or even more, and each of these asserts an existence independent of the other. The impulse and suggestion to this is in general first given by differences in pronunciation, which are presently represented by differences in spelling; or it will sometimes happen that what at first were no more than precarious and arbitrary variations in this last come in the end to be regarded as words altogether distinct; they detach themselves from one another, not again to reunite; just as accidental varieties in fruits or flowers, produced at hazard, have permanently separated off, and settled into different kinds. They have each its own distinct domain of meaning, as by general agreement assigned to it; dividing the inheritance between them, which before they held in common. No one who has not watched and catalogued these words as they have fallen under his notice, would believe how numerous they are.

Sometimes as the accent is placed on one syl-

* See Génin, *Des Variations du Langaje Français*, p. 12.

lable of a word or another, it comes to have different significations, and those so distinctly marked, that the separation may be regarded as complete. Examples of this are the following: 'dívers,' and 'divérse;' 'cónjure' and 'conjúre;' 'ántic' and 'antíque;' 'húman' and 'humáne;' 'úrban' and 'urbáne;' 'géntle,' 'géntile,' and 'gentéel;' 'cústom' and 'costúme;' 'éssay' and 'assáy;' 'próperty' and 'propríety.' Or again, a word is pronounced at full, or somewhat more shortly: thus 'spirit' and 'sprite;' 'blossom' and 'bloom;' 'courtesy' and 'curtsey;' 'nourish' and 'nurse;' 'personality' and 'personalty;' 'fantasy' and 'fancy;' 'triumph' and 'trump' (the *winning* card *); 'happily' and 'haply;' 'waggon' and 'wain;' 'ordinance' and 'ordnance;' 'shallop' and 'sloop;' 'brabble' and 'brawl;' 'syrup' and 'shrub;' 'balsam' and 'balm;' 'dame' and 'dam;' 'eremite' and 'hermit;' 'nighest' and 'next;' 'poesy' and 'posy;' 'achievement' and 'hatchment;' 'manœuvre' and 'manure;'—or with the dropping of the first letter or letters: 'history' and 'story;' 'harbour' and 'arbour;' 'etiquette' and 'ticket;' 'escheat' and 'cheat;' 'estate' and 'state;' and, older probably than any of these, 'other' and 'or;'—or with a dropping of the last syllable, as 'Britany' and 'Britain;' 'crony' and 'crone;'—or, without losing a syllable, with more or less stress laid on the close: 'regiment'

* See Latimer's famous *Sermon on Cards*, where 'triumph' and 'trump' are interchangeably used.

and 'regimen;' 'corpse' and 'corps;' 'bite' and 'bit;' 'sire' and 'sir;' 'land' or 'laund' and 'lawn;' 'suite' and 'suit;' 'swinge' and 'swing;' 'gulph' and 'gulp;' 'launch' and 'lance;' 'wealth' and 'weal;' 'stripe' and 'strip;' 'borne' and 'born;' 'clothes' and 'cloths;'—or a slight internal vowel change finds place, as between 'dent' and 'dint;' 'rant' and 'rent' (a ranting actor tears or *rends* a passion to tatters); 'creak' and 'croak;' 'float' and 'fleet;' 'sleek' and 'slick;' 'sheen' and 'shine;' 'shriek' and 'shrike;' 'pick' and 'peck;' 'peak' 'pique' and 'pike;' 'snip' 'snib' and 'snub;' 'plot' and 'plat;' 'weald' and 'wold;' 'drip' and 'drop;' 'wreathe' and 'writhe;' 'spear' and 'spire' ('the least *spire* of grass,' South); 'trist' and 'trust;' 'band' 'bend' and 'bond;' 'cope' 'cape' and 'cap;' 'tip' and 'top;' 'slent' (now obsolete) and 'slant;' 'sweep' and 'swoop;' 'wrest' and 'wrist;' 'gad' (now surviving only in gadfly) and 'goad;' 'complement' and 'compliment;' 'spike' and 'spoke;' 'tamper' and 'temper;' 'ragged' and 'rugged;' 'gargle' and 'gurgle;' 'snake' and 'sneak' (both crawl); 'deal' and 'dole;' 'giggle' and 'gaggle' (this last is now commonly spelt 'cackle'); 'scribble' and 'scrabble'; 'flicker' and 'flacker' (now obsolete); 'gourmand' and 'gormand;' 'sip' 'sop' 'soup' and 'sup;' 'clack,' 'click' and 'clock;' 'tetchy' and 'touchy;' 'sauce' and 'souse;' 'spoil' and 'spill;' 'vendor' and 'vender;' 'visitor' and 'visiter;' 'neat' and 'nett;'

'stud' and 'steed;' 'then' and 'than;'* 'grits' and 'grouts;' 'spirt' and 'sprout;' 'prune' and 'preen;' 'mister' and 'master;' 'allay' and 'alloy;' 'ghostly' and 'ghastly;' 'person' and 'parson;' 'cleft' and 'clift' (now written 'cliff'); 'travel' and 'travail;' 'truth' and 'troth;' 'pennon' and 'pinion;' 'quail' 'quell' and 'kill;' 'metal' and 'mettle;' 'chagrin' and 'shagreen;' 'can' and 'ken;' 'Francis' and 'Frances;'† 'chivalry' and 'cavalry;' 'oaf' and 'elf;' 'thresh' and 'thrash;' 'lose' and 'loose;' 'taint' and 'tint.' Sometimes the difference is mainly or entirely in the initial consonants, as between 'phial' and 'vial;' 'pother' and 'bother;' 'bursar' and 'purser;' 'thrice' and 'trice;' 'fitch' and 'vetch;' 'strinkle' (now obsolete) and 'sprinkle;' 'shatter' and 'scatter;' 'chattel' and 'cattle;' 'chant' and 'cant;' 'champaign' and 'campaign;' 'zealous' and 'jealous;' 'channel' and 'kennel;' 'quay' and 'key;' 'thrill' 'trill' and 'drill;'—or in the consonants in the middle of the word, as between 'cancer' and 'canker;' 'nipple' and 'nibble;' 'tittle' and 'title;' 'price' and 'prize;' 'consort' and 'concert;'—or there is a change in both consonants, as in 'pipe' and 'fife.'

* On these words see a learned discussion in *English Retraced*, Cambridge, 1862.

† The appropriating of 'Frances' to women and 'Francis' to men is quite modern; it was formerly as often Sir Frances Drake as Sir Francis, while Fuller (*Holy State*, b. iv. c. 14) speaks of Francis Brandon, eldest *daughter* of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk; and see Ben Jonson, *New Inn*, Act. ii. Sc. i.

Or a word is spelt now with a final *k* and now with a final *ch*; out of this variation two different words have been formed, with, it may be, other slight differences superadded; thus is it with 'poke' and 'poach;' 'dyke' and 'ditch;' 'stink' and 'stench;' 'prick' and 'pritch' (now obsolete); 'break' and 'breach,' to which may be added 'broach;' 'lace' and 'latch;' 'stick' and 'stitch;' 'lurk' and 'lurch;' 'bank' and 'bench;' 'stark' and 'starch;' 'wake' and 'watch.' So too *t* and *d* are easily exchanged; as in 'clod' and 'clot;' 'vend' and 'vent;' 'brood' and 'brat;' 'halt' and 'hold;' 'sad' and 'set;' 'card' and 'chart;' 'medley' and 'motley.' Or there has grown up, beside the accurate pronunciation, a popular as well; and this in the end has formed itself into another word; thus it is with 'housewife' and 'hussey;' 'grandfather' and 'gaffer;' 'grandmother' and 'gammer;' 'hanaper' and 'hamper;' 'puisne' and 'puny;' 'patron' and 'pattern;' 'spital' (hospital) and 'spittle' (house of correction); 'accompt' and 'account;' 'donjon' and 'dungeon;' 'nestle' and 'nuzzle' (now obsolete); 'Egyptian' and 'gypsy;' 'Bethlehem' and 'Bedlam;' 'exemplar' and 'sampler;' 'procuracy' and 'proxy;' 'dolphin' and 'dauphin;' 'iota' and 'jot.'

Other changes cannot perhaps be reduced exactly under any of these heads; as between 'ounce' and 'inch;' 'errant' and 'arrant;' 'slack' and 'slake;' 'twang' and 'tang;' 'valet' and 'varlet;' 'slow' and 'slough;' 'bow' and 'bough;' 'hurl'

and 'whirl;' 'hew' and 'hough;' 'dies' and 'dice' (both plurals of 'die'); 'plunge' and 'flounce;' 'egg' and 'edge;' 'staff' and 'stave;' 'scull' 'school' and 'shoal;' 'benefit' and 'benefice.'* Or, it may be, the difference is in the spelling only, appreciable by the eye, but escaping altogether the ear. It is thus with 'draft' and 'draught;' 'plain' and 'plane;' 'coign' and 'coin;' 'flower' and 'flour;' 'check' and 'cheque;' 'straight' and 'strait;' 'ton' and 'tun;' 'road' and 'rode;' 'throw' and 'throe;' 'wrack' and 'rack;' 'gait' and 'gate;' 'hoard' and 'horde;' 'knoll' and 'noll;' 'chord' and 'cord;' 'drachm' and 'dram;' 'sergeant' and 'serjeant;' 'mask' and 'masque;' 'villain' and 'villein.'

Now, if you will put the matter to proof, you will find, I believe, in every case that there has

* A singularly characteristic trait of Papal policy once turned upon the fact that 'beneficium' contained in itself both 'benefice' and 'benefit.' Pope Adrian the Fourth writing to Frederic the First to complain of certain conduct of his, reminded the Emperor that he had placed the imperial crown upon his head, and would willingly have conferred even greater 'beneficia' upon him than this. Had this been allowed to pass, it would no doubt have been afterwards appealed to as an admission on the Emperor's part, that he held the Empire as a feud or fief (for 'beneficium' was then the technical word for this, though the meaning has much narrowed since) from the Pope—the very point in dispute between them. The word was indignantly repelled by the Emperor and the whole German nation, whereupon the Pope appealed to the etymology, that 'beneficium' was but 'bonum factum,' and protested that he meant no more than to remind the Emperor of the 'benefits' which he had done him, and which he would have willingly multiplied still more (*Neander, Kirch. Geschicte*, vol. v. p. 318).

Or a word is spelt now with a final *k* and now with a final *ch*; out of this variation two different words have been formed, with, it may be, other slight differences superadded; thus is it with 'poke' and 'poach;' 'dyke' and 'ditch;' 'stink' and 'stench;' 'prick' and 'pritch' (now obsolete); 'break' and 'breach,' to which may be added 'broach;' 'lace' and 'latch;' 'stick' and 'stitch;' 'lurk' and 'lurch;' 'bank' and 'bench;' 'stark' and 'starch;' 'wake' and 'watch.' So too *t* and *d* are easily exchanged; as in 'clod' and 'clot;' 'vend' and 'vent;' 'brood' and 'brat;' 'halt' and 'hold;' 'sad' and 'set;' 'card' and 'chart;' 'medley' and 'motley.' Or there has grown up, beside the accurate pronunciation, a popular as well; and this in the end has formed itself into another word; thus it is with 'housewife' and 'hussey;' 'grandfather' and 'gaffer;' 'grandmother' and 'gammer;' 'hanaper' and 'hamper;' 'puisne' and 'puny;' 'patron' and 'pattern;' 'spital' (hospital) and 'spittle' (house of correction); 'accompt' and 'account;' 'donjon' and 'dungeon;' 'nestle' and 'nuzzle' (now obsolete); 'Egyptian' and 'gypsy;' 'Bethlehem' and 'Bedlam;' 'exemplar' and 'sampler;' 'procuracy' and 'proxy;' 'dolphin' and 'dauphin;' 'iota' and 'jot.'

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group of words which I have adduced, to detect shades of meaning which one word has obtained and not the other.*

There is another very sensible gain which the language has made, although of a different kind altogether. We may note a tendency which has been at work in it for a very long time past, to bring the several parts of a word into linguistic harmony, so that it shall not be made up of a Saxon prefix or suffix, joined to a Latin root, but shall be all homogeneous; and if Latin in the

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* The same happens in other languages. Thus in Greek '*ἀνάθεμα*' and '*ἀνάθημα*' both signify that which is devoted, though in very different senses, to the higher powers; '*θάρσος*,' boldness, and '*θράσος*,' temerity, were at first but different spellings of the same word; so too *γρῖπος* and *γρῖφος*, *ἔθος* and *ἦθος*, *βρύκω* and *βρύχω*: and probably *ὀβελὸς* and *ὀβολὸς*, *σορὸς* and *σωρὸς*. In Latin 'penna' and 'pinna' differ only in form, and signify alike a 'wing;' while yet 'penna' has come to be used for the wing of a bird, 'pinna' (its diminutive, 'pinnaculum,' has given us 'pinnacle') for that of a building; so is it with 'Thrax' a Thracian, and 'Threx' a gladiator; with 'codex' and 'caudex;' 'forfex' and 'forceps;' 'anticus' and 'antiquus;' 'celeber' and 'creber;' 'infacetus' and 'inficetus;' 'mulgeo' and 'mulceo;' 'providentia,' 'prudentia,' and 'provincia;' 'columen' and 'culmen;' 'coïtus' and 'cœtus;' 'ægrimonia' and 'ærumna;' 'Lucina' and 'luna;' 'cohors' and 'cors;' 'navita' and 'nauta;' in German with 'rechtlich' and 'redlich;' 'schlecht' and 'schlicht;' 'golden' and 'gulden;' 'höfisch' and 'hübsch;' 'ahnden' and 'ahnen' (see a very interesting notice in Grimm); 'biegsam' and 'beugsam;' 'fursehung' and 'vorsehung;' 'deich' and 'teich;' 'trotz' and 'trutz;' 'born' and 'brunn;' 'athem' and 'odem:' in French with 'harnois,' the armour or 'harness' of a soldier, and 'harnais' of a horse; with 'foible' and 'faible;' with 'Zéphire' and 'zéphir;' and with many more.

body of the word, then such throughout. Thus it evidently was not so with 'unsatiable,' unglorious,' 'undiscreet,' 'uncredible,' 'unmeasurable,' 'untolerable,' 'unreligious' (all in Wiclif); which have all now severally given place to 'insatiable,' 'inglorious,' indiscreet,' and the rest; while 'untimely,' 'unwitting,' and many more, in which there existed no discord between the parts, remain as they were. In the same way 'unpure' (Barnes) has been replaced by 'impure,' 'unfirm' (Shakespeare) by 'infirm,' 'undecent' (Holland) by 'indecent,' 'unactive' (Milton) by 'inactive;' so too 'unpossible,' which is properly the reading of our Authorized Version of Scripture at Matt. xvii. 20; xix. 26, and, I believe, throughout, has been silently changed into 'impossible.' Here and there, but very rarely, the tendency has been in the opposite direction—to create these anomalies, not to remove them. Thus Milton's 'inchastity' (prose), 'ingrateful,' have given place to the less correct 'unchastity,' 'ungrateful.'

And as with the prefix, so also it has fared with the suffix. A large group of our Latin words had not for a long while a Latin, but a Saxon termination. We have several of these in the Bible and in the Prayer Book; 'pureness,' for example, 'frailness,' 'disquietness,' 'perfectness,' and 'simpleness.' The first of these may perhaps be said still to survive; but for the others we have substituted 'frailty' (recalled it, we may say, for it was already in *Piers Ploughman*), 'disquietude,' 'perfection,' 'simplicity.' The same has hap-

pened with a multitude of others—'gayness' (*Piers Ploughman*) has given way to 'gaiety,' 'poverness' (*ibid.*) to 'poverty,' 'subtleness' (Sidney) to 'subtlety,' 'ableness' (Spenser) to 'ability;' 'cruelness' (Golding) to 'cruelty;' 'desolateness' (Andrews) to 'desolation;' 'partialness' (Frith) to 'partiality;' 'spiritualness,' 'vainness,' 'realness,' 'vulgarness,' 'immoralness,' (all in Rogers) severally to 'spirituality,' 'vanity,' 'reality,' 'vulgarity,' 'immorality;' nor would it be difficult to augment this list. So too, though we have not at this day altogether rejected words in which the French termination 'able' is combined with a Saxon root, as 'unspeakable' and the like, still there has been an evident disposition among us to diminish their number. There were once far more of these, as 'unlackable,' 'ungainsayable' (both in Pecock), 'matchable' (Spenser), 'woundable' (Fuller), 'speakable' (Milton), than there are now. 'The rejection of these hybrid words,' as has been well said,* 'from the modern vocabulary is curious, as an instance of the unconscious exercise of a linguistic instinct by the English people. The objection to such adjectives is their mongrel character, the root being Saxon, the termination Romanic; and it is an innate feeling of the incongruity of such alliances, not the speculative theories of philologists, which has driven so many of them out of circulation.'

But changes not unlike to those which I have

Marsh, *Origin and History of the English Language*, p. 475.

just noted have come over the language, where there was no such inducement arising from want of congruity in the component parts of a word; where, on the contrary, it was already homogeneous in the sources from which it was derived. In these instances the language seems, so to say, not for a long while to have made up its mind which suffix it would employ, and has in later times rejected one which in earlier it appeared disposed to adopt, and in the stead of this adopted another. The termination 'ness,' which, as we just now saw, has lost its hold on a great many Latin words, with which it certainly had no right to be joined, has more than made good its losses in other directions. Many words that ended for a while in 'ship,' now end in 'ness,' as 'gladship' (*Ormulum*), 'mildship' (*Hali Meidenhad*), 'idleship' (*ibid.*); which are now severally 'gladness,' 'mildness,' 'idleness.' More numerous are those which, terminating once in 'head' or 'hood' (I group these together as being only varieties of the same suffix), have finally settled down with that same termination. I adduce a few, 'busihede,' 'wearihede,' 'holihede,' 'newhede,' 'godlihede,' 'swifthede,' 'greenhede,' 'fulhede,' 'vilehede,' 'blisedhede' (all in *The Ayenbite*); 'wickedhed,' 'pensivehed,' 'lowlihed' (all in Chaucer); 'onehed,' 'worldlihood' (Pecock) 'fulsomehed,' 'fairhed,' 'sinfulhed,' 'rightwisehed,' 'tamehed' (all in the *Story of Genesis*); 'fulhed,' 'mightihed' (both in Wiclif); 'seemlihed,' 'drearihed' (also 'dreariment'), 'drowsihed,' 'livelihed,' 'goodlihed,' 'beastlihed

(all in Spenser). In place of these we have 'business,' 'weariness,' 'holiness,' and so on with the others.

Then again, words not a few, once ending in 'hood,' have relinquished this in favour of 'ship;' thus 'apostlehood,' disciplehood,' 'headhood' (all in Pecock), have all so done. Others, but they are fewer, for 'hood' have taken 'dom;' thus 'Christenhood' (Pecock) is 'Christendom' now; or for 'rick,' which survives only in 'bishoprick' (the domain of a bishop), have taken the same; thus 'kingrick' (*Piers Ploughman*) is 'kingdom' now. Then too many adjectives ending in 'ful' have changed this for 'ly' (= like); thus 'gastful,' 'loveful,' 'grisful' (all in Wiclif), are severally now 'ghastly,' 'lovely,' 'grisly.' I shall note elsewhere the extensive perishing of adjectives ending in 'some.' Many of these however still survive with some other suffix—often with one which brings their component parts into harmony with one another; thus 'humoursome' survives in 'humorous,' 'laboursome' in 'laborious,' 'clamoursome' in 'clamorous;' or sometimes with a modification which had no such motive, as in 'hatesum,' which is now 'hateful,' and 'friendsome,' which is now 'friendly,' 'mirksome' (Spenser) which is now 'murky.' The subject which I have just treated is one that has hitherto attracted almost no attention. No catalogues of these words, which I know of, have ever yet been attempted.

But my subject is inexhaustible; it hardly owns

any limits except those, often narrow enough, imposed by my own imperfect knowledge on the one side; and on the other, by the necessity of only dealing with such portions of the subject as will admit a popular setting forth. Pausing then here in the midst, rather than at the close of my subject, I propose to occupy myself for what remains of this lecture with a brief consideration of the *motives* which induce a people to seek for these augmentations of their vocabulary.

And first, the reaching out after greater precision is a frequent motive and inducement to this. It has been excellently said: 'Every new term, expressing a fact or a difference not precisely or adequately expressed by any other word in the same language, is a new organ of thought for the mind that has learned it.'* The limits of their vocabulary are in fact for most men the limits of their knowledge; and in a great degree for us all. I do not say that it is absolutely impossible to have our mental conceptions clearer and more distinct than our words; but it is very hard to have, and still harder to keep, them so. And therefore it is that men, conscious of this, so soon as ever they have learned to distinguish in their minds, are urged by an almost irresistible impulse to distinguish also in their words. They feel that nothing is secured till this has been done.

The sense that a word covers too large a space

* Coleridge, *Church and State*, p. 200.

of meaning, will sometimes occasion the introduction of another, which shall relieve it of a portion of this. Thus, there was a time when 'witch' was applied equally to male and female dealers in unlawful magical arts. Simon Magus, for example, and Elymas are both 'witches' in Wiclif's *New Testament* (Acts viii. 9; xiii. 8), and Posthumus in *Cymbeline*: but when the medieval Latin 'sortiarius' (not 'sortitor' as in Richardson), supplied another word, the French 'sorcier,' and thus our English 'sorcerer' (originally the 'caster of lots'), then 'witch' gradually was confined to the female practiser of these arts, while 'sorcerer' was applied to the male.

New necessities, new evolutions of society into more complex conditions, evoke new words; which come forth, because they are required now; but did not formerly exist, because they were not required in the period preceding. For example, in Greece so long as the poet sang his own verses, 'singer' (ἀοιδὸς) sufficiently expressed the double function; such a 'singer' was Homer, and such Homer describes Demodocus, the bard of the Phæacians; that double function, in fact, not being in his time contemplated as double, but each of its parts so naturally completing the other, that no second word was required. When, however, in the division of labour one made the verses which another chaunted, then 'poet' or 'maker,' a word unknown in the Homeric age, arose. In like manner, when 'physicians' were the only natural philosophers, the word covered this mean-

ing as well as that other which it still retains; but when the investigation of nature and natural causes detached itself from the art of healing, became an independent study, the name 'physician' remained to that which was as the stock and stem of the art, while the new offshoot sought out a new name for itself.

We have long had 'assimilation' in our dictionaries; 'dissimilation' has not yet found its way into them, but it speedily will. It will appear first, if it has not already appeared, in our books on language.* I express myself with this confidence, because advances in philology have rendered it a matter of necessity that we should possess a word to designate a certain process, and no other word would designate it at all so well. There is a process of 'assimilation' going on very extensively in language; the organs of speech finding themselves helped by changing one letter for another which has just occurred, or will just occur in a word; thus we say not 'a*df*iance' but 'a*ff*iance,' not 're*n*ow*m*,' as our ancestors did when 'renommée' was first naturalized, but 're*n*ow*n*;' we say too, though we do not write it, 'cu*b*board' and not 'cu*p*board.' At the same time there is another opposite process, where some letter would recur too often for euphony or ease in speaking, were the strict form of the word too closely held fast; and where consequently this letter is exchanged for some other, generally for

* Pott (*Etym. Forsch.* vol. ii. p. 65) has introduced it into German.

some nearly allied; thus 'cæ*r*uleus' was once 'cæ*l*uleus,' from cælum: 'meridies' is for 'medidies,' or medius dies. So too the Italians prefer 've*le*no' to 've*ne*no;' the Germans 'kartoffel' to 'tartüffel,' the original name of the potatoe; and we 'cinnamo*n*' to cinnamo*m*' (the earlier form); in 'turtle,' 'marble,' 'purple' we have shrunk from the double '*r*' of 'turtur,' 'marmor,' 'purpura;' and this process of *making unlike*, requiring a term to express it, will create, has indeed already created, the word 'dissimilation,' which will presently establish itself in far wider than its primary use.*

'Watershed' has only recently appeared in books of geography; and yet how much more convenient it is than 'line of water-parting,' which it has superseded; meaning, as it does, not merely that which *sheds* the waters, but that which *divides* them ('wasserscheide'); that ridge and highest line in a mountain region, where the waters of that region separate off and divide, to one side, and to the other; as in the Rocky Mountains there are streams rising hardly a few miles apart, which flow severally east and west, and, if not in unbroken course, yet as affluents to larger rivers, fall at last severally into the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Not merely geographical terminology, but geography itself, had a benefactor in him who first endowed it with so expressive and comprehensive a word. 'Affluent,' by which I just

* See Dwight, *Modern Philology*, 2nd Series, p. 100.

now designated a stream which does not flow into the sea, but joins some larger river,—thus the Isis is an 'affluent' of the Thames, the Moselle of the Rhine,—is itself an example in the same kind, having been only recently constituted a substantive, and so used; while yet its utility is obvious. 'Confluents' is a fitter term, where the rivers, like the Missouri and the Missisippi, have been of equal or nearly equal importance up to the time of their meeting.

Again, new words are coined for the filling up of gaps in the language. Thoughtful men, comparing their own language with some other, become conscious of this and that, which is worth expressing, which, it may be, it highly imports to express, and for which other languages have found an adequate utterance, but not their own; and with more or less success proceed to supply the deficiency. For example, that sin of sins, the undue love of self, with the postponing of the interests of all others to our own, being a sin as old as the Fall, had yet for a long time no word to express it in English. Help was sought from the Greek, and 'philauty' (*φιλαυτία*) more than once attempted by our scholars; but it found no popular acceptance. This failing, men turned to the Latin; one writer proposing to supply the want by calling the sin 'suicism,' and the man a 'suist,' as one seeking *his own* things ('sua'), but this with no better success; and our ethical terminology was here still incomplete, till some of the Puritan divines, drawing on native resources,

devised 'selfish' and 'selfishness,' words to us seeming obvious enough, but which yet are little more than two hundred years old.*

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* A passage from Hacket's *Life of Archbishop Williams*, part 2, p. 144, marks the first rise of 'selfish,' and the quarter in which it rose: 'When they [the Presbyterians] saw that he was not *selfish* (it is a word of their own new mint),' &c. In Whitlock's *Zootomia* (1654) there is another indication of its novelty, p. 364: 'If constancy may be tainted with this *selfishness* (to use our *new wordings* of old and general actings).' It is he who in his *Grand Schismatic, or Suist Anatomized*, puts forward 'suist,' and 'suicism,' as words which would meet the necessities of the case. 'Suicism' had not in his time the obvious objection of resembling 'suicide' too nearly, and being liable to be confused with it; for 'suicide' did not exist in the language till some twenty years later. Its coming up is marked by this passage in Phillips' *New World of Words*, 3rd edit., 1671: 'Nor less to be exploded is the word "*suicide*," which may as well seem to participate of *sus* a sow, as of the pronoun *sui*.' In the *Index* to Jackson's *Works*, published two years later, it is still '*suicidium*'—'the horrid *suicidium* of the Jews at York.' 'Suicide' is of later introduction into French. Génin (*Récréations Philol.* vol. i. p. 194) places it about the year 1738, and makes the Abbé Desfontaines its first sponsor. He is wrong, as we have just seen, in assuming that we borrowed it from the French, and that it did not exist in English till the middle of last century. The French complain that the fashion of suicide was borrowed from England. It is probable that the word was so.

Let me urge here the advantage of a collection, as nearly complete as the industry of the collectors could make it, of all the notices in our literature, which serve as dates for the first incoming of new words into the language, or of new uses in which old ones are employed. These notices are of the most various kinds. Sometimes they are protests and remonstrances, as that just quoted, against a new word's introduction; sometimes they are gratulations at the same; while many, neither approving nor disapproving, merely state, or allow us to gather, the fact of its recent appearance. Many such notices are

'Its,' the anomalously formed genitive of 'it,' was created with the object of removing an incon-

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in Richardson's *Dictionary*: thus one from Lord Bacon under 'essay;' from Swift under 'banter;' from Sir Thomas Elyot under 'mansuetude;' from Lord Chesterfield under 'flirtation;' from *The Spectator*, No. 537, under 'caricature;' from Davies and Marlowe's *Epigrams* under 'gull;' from Roger North under 'sham' (Appendix); from Dryden under 'mob,' 'philanthropy,' 'witticism,' which last word Dryden claims for his own; from Evelyn under 'miss;' and from Milton under 'demagogue.' There are also notices of the same kind in *Todd's Johnson*. But the work is one which could only be accomplished by many lovers of their native tongue throwing into a common stock the results of their several studies. The sources which would yield these illustrative passages cannot beforehand be enumerated, for none could say in what unexpected quarters they would sometimes be found. As a slight sample of what might be effected here by the joint contributions of many, let me throw together references to a few such passages, which I do not think have found their way into our dictionaries. Thus add to that which Richardson has quoted on 'banter,' another from *The Tatler*, No. 230, marking the disfavour with which it was regarded at the first. On 'plunder' there are two instructive passages in Fuller's *Church History*, b. xi. § 4, 33; and b. ix. § 4; and one in Heylin's *Animadversions* thereupon, p. 196; on 'admiralty' see a note in Harington's *Ariosto*, book 19; on 'maturity' Sir Thomas Elyot's *Governor*, i. 22; and on 'industry' the same, i. 23; on 'neophyte' a notice in Fulke's *Defence of the English Bible*, Parker Society's edition, p. 586; on 'fanatic' a passage in Fuller, *Mixt Contemplations in Better Times*, p. 212 ed. 1841, and another in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*; and on 'panorama,' and marking its recent introduction (it is not in Johnson), a passage in Pegge's *Anecdotes of the English Language*, first published in 1803, but my reference is to the edition of 1814, p. 306; on 'accommodate,' and supplying a date for its first coming into popular use, see Shakespeare's 2 *Henry IV*. Act 3, Sc. 2; on 'shrub,' Junius' *Etymologicon*, s. v. 'syrup;' on 'sentiment' and 'cajole' Skinner, s. vv., in his *Etymologicon* ('vox nuper civitate donata'); and on 'opera' Evelyn's *Memoirs and Diary*,

venience which for a while made itself seriously felt in the language. The circumstances of the

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1827, vol. i. pp. 189, 190. 'Starvation' may have been an old word in Scotland, but it was unknown in England until used by Mr. Dundas, the first Lord Melville, therefore called 'Starvation Dundas,' in a debate on American affairs in 1775; for proof of this see *Letters of Horace Walpole and Mann*, vol. ii. p. 396, and Pegge's *Anecdotes of the English Language*, 1814, p. 38. In such a collection should be included those passages which supply *implicit* evidence for the non-existence of a word up to a certain date. It may be urged that it is difficult, nay impossible, to prove a negative; yet when Bolingbroke wrote as follows, it is certain that 'isolated' did not exist in our language: 'The events we are witnesses of in the course of the longest life, appear to us very often original, unprepared, signal and *unrelative*: if I may use such a word for want of a better in English. In French I would say *isolés*' (*Notes and Queries*, No. 226). Compare Lord Chesterfield in a letter to Bishop Chenevix, of date March 12, 1767: 'I have survived almost all my contemporaries, and as I am too old to make new acquaintances, I find myself *isolé*.' Fuller would have scarcely spoken of a 'meteor of foolish fire' (*Comm. on Ruth*, p. 38), if 'ignis fatuus' had not been, when he wrote, still strange to the language. So too when Sir Walter Raleigh spoke of 'strange visions which are also called *panici terrores*' (*Hist. of the World*, iii. 5, 8), it is tolerably plain that 'panic' was not yet recognized among us. In like manner when Holland, translating Pliny's long account of the sculpture of antiquity, never once uses the word 'sculptor,' but always 'imager' in its room, I feel tolerably sure that 'sculptor' had not yet come into existence. The use of 'noctambulones' by Donne makes me pretty sure that in his time 'somnambulist' had not been invented. When Hacket (*Life of Archbishop Williams*, vol. ii. p. 182) speaks of 'the *cimici* in our bedsteads,' these had scarcely gotten the name which now they bear. So, too, it is pretty certain that 'amphibious' was not yet English, when one writes (in 1618): 'We are like those creatures called ἀμφίβια, which live in water or on land.' Ζωολογία, as the title of a book published in 1649, makes it clear that 'zoology' was not yet in our vocabulary, as ζωόφυτον (Jackson)

rise of this little word, and of the place which it has secured itself among us, are sufficiently curious to justify a treatment which might seem out of proportion with the importance that it has, but

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proves the same for 'zoophyte,' θεοκρατία (J. Taylor) for 'theocracy,' ἄθεοι (Ascham) for 'atheist' (see back, p. 113), and πολύθεισμος (Gell, it is a word of his own invention) for 'polytheism.' One precaution, let me observe, would be necessary in the collecting, or rather in the adopting, of any statements about the newness of a word—for the passages themselves, even when erroneous, ought not the less to be noted—namely, that no one's affirmation ought to be accepted simply and at once as to this novelty, seeing that all here are liable to error. Thus more than one which Sir Thomas Elyot indicates as new in his time, 'magnanimity' for example (*The Governor*, 2, 14), are frequent in Chaucer. 'Sentiment,' which Skinner affirmed to have only recently obtained the rights of English citizenship from the translators of French books, continually recurs in the same. In *Notes and Queries*, No. 225, there is a useful catalogue of recent neologies in our speech, while yet at least half a dozen in the list have not the smallest right to be so considered. I have suggested above that not merely new words, but new uses of old ones, should be noted, and the time of their first appearing. Take for instance the two following, in proof that the religious use of 'edify' and 'edification' began among the Puritans; and this first from Oldham:

> 'The graver sort dislike all poetry,
> Which does not, as they call it, *edify*;'

and this from South: 'All being took up and busied, some in pulpits and some in tubs, in the grand work of preaching and holding forth, and that of *edification*, as the word then went,' &c. Here too the evidence may not be positive, but negative. Thus if I read in Fuller of 'that beast in the Brazile which in fourteen days goes no further than a man may throw a stone, called therefore, by the Spaniards *pigritia*,' I am tolerably certain that the aï, as the natives call it, had not yet found among us the name 'sloth' which now it bears.

which none will deem so, who are at all acquainted with the remarkable facts of our language bound up in the story of the word.

Within the last few years attention has been drawn to the circumstance that 'its' is of comparatively recent introduction into the language. The earliest example of it which has yet been adduced is from Florio's *World of Words*, 1598; the next from the translation of Montaigne by the same author, 1603. You will not find it once in our English Bible, the office which it fulfils for us now being there fulfilled either by 'his' (Gen. i. 11; Exod. xxxvii. 17; Matt. v. 15) or 'her' (Jon. i. 15; Rev. xxii. 2), these applied as freely to inanimate things as to persons; or else by 'thereof' (Gen. iii. 6; Ps. lxv. 10) or 'of it' (Dan. vii. 5). Nor may Lev. xxv. 5 be urged as invalidating this assertion, as there will presently be occasion to show. To Bacon 'its' is altogether unknown; he too had no scruple about using 'his' as a neuter; as in the following passage: 'Learning hath *his* infancy, when *it* is but beginning and almost childish; then *his* youth, when *it* is luxuriant and juvenile; then *his* strength of years, when *it* is solid and reduced; and lastly *his* old age, when *it* waxeth dry and exhaust.'* 'Its' occurs very rarely in Shakespeare, in far the larger number of his plays not once; indeed, all counted, I do not believe more than ten times in all; though, singularly enough, three of these

* *Essay* 58.

uses occur in one speech of twelve lines in *The Winter's Tale.** Milton for the most part avoids it; yet we find it a few times in his poetry.†

It is not hard to trace the motives which led to the formation of this new genitive, or the causes which have enabled it against much tacit opposition to hold its own. A manifest inconvenience attended the employment of 'his' both for masculine and neuter, or to speak more accurately, for persons and for things; this namely that the personifying power of 'his,' no unimportant power for the poet, was seriously impaired, almost destroyed, thereby. It would be often difficult, nay impossible, to determine, whether such a personification was intended or not; and even where the context made perfectly evident that such *was* meant, the employment of the same form where nothing of the kind was meant, contributed greatly to diminish its effect. Craik has noticed as a consequence of this that Milton prefers, wherever it is possible, the feminine to the masculine personification,‡ as if he felt that the latter was always obscure from the risk of 'his' being taken

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* Act 1. Sc. 2.

† As in *P. L.* i. 254; iv. 813. Unluckily neither Mrs. Cowden Clarke, to whom we owe so invaluable a Concordance of Shakespeare's *Plays* (but why not of his *Poems* as well?) nor Mr. Prendergast, to whom we are indebted for one of Milton's *Poetical Works*, were aware of the importance of registering the very rare occurrences of 'its' in either author, and we look in vain for any notice of the word in them.

‡ Thus, see *P. L.* 2, 4, 175, 584; 9, 1103; *Comus*, 396, 468.

for the neuter pronoun. There was room too for other confusions. When we read of the Ancient of Days, '*his* throne was like the fiery flame, and *his* wheels as burning fire' (Dan. vii. 9), who does not now refer the second 'his' as well as the first to 'the Ancient of Days'? it indeed belongs to the throne.

So strongly had these and other inconveniences made themselves felt, that there was already, and had been for a long while, a genitival employment of 'it,' whereby it was made to serve all the uses which 'its' served at a later day. In some dialects, in the West Midland for example, this dates very far back.* We have one example of 'it,' so used, in the Authorized Version of Scripture, Lev. xxv. 5: 'That which groweth of *it* own accord thou shalt not reap'—which has silently been changed in later editions to '*its* own accord;' but 'it' was the reading in the exemplar edition of 1611, and in all the earlier. Exactly the same phrase, '*it* own accord,' occurs in the Geneva Version at Acts xii. 10. There are several examples, thirteen have been counted, of this use of 'it' in Shakespeare; thus in *The Winter's Tale*, 3, 2: 'The innocent milk in *it* most innocent mouth;' and again in *King John*, 2, 3: 'Go to *it* grandame.' And they are by no means unfrequent in other writers of the earlier half of the seventeenth century. Thus in Rogers' *Naaman the Syrian*, published in 1642, but the lectures delivered

* See Guest, *Hist. of English Rhythms*, vol. i. p. 280.

some eight years earlier, 'its' nowhere occurs, but a genitival 'it' often; thus, 'I am at this mark, to withdraw the soul from the life of *it* own hand' (*Preface*, p. 1); and again, 'The power of the spirit is such that it blows at *it* own pleasure' (p. 441); and again, 'The scope which mercy propounds to herself of the turning of the soul to God, even the glory of *it* own self' (p. 442).*

No doubt we have here in this use of 'it' a stepping-stone by which the introduction of 'its' was greatly aided. And yet for a long while the word was very reluctantly allowed, above all in any statelier style. It was evidently regarded as a distasteful makeshift, not always to be dispensed with, but to which recourse should be had only when this was unavoidable. This feeling is not even now extinct. I remember hearing Lord Macaulay say that he always avoided 'its' when he could; while to every writer of English verse, who has any sense of melody, the necessity of using it is often most unwelcome. It is in fact a *parvenu*, which forced itself into good society at last, but not with the good will of those who in the end had no choice but to admit it.

There is indeed a very singular period in our literature, extending over more than the first half of the seventeenth century, during which the old grammatical usages, namely 'his' applied to neuters

* See upon this whole subject Craik, *On the English of Shakespeare*, 2nd edit. p. 97; Marsh, *Manual of the English Language*, Engl. edit. p. 278; *Transactions of the Philological Society*, vol. i. p. 280; and Wright, *The Bible Wordbook*, s. v. 'it.'

as freely as to masculines, or instead of this, 'thereof,' or 'of it,' were virtually condemned—the first as involving many possible confusions, the others as clumsy and antiquated contrivances for escaping these confusions, while yet at the same time the help of 'its' is claimed as sparingly as possible, by some is not claimed at all. Thus I have carefully examined large portions of Daniel and Drayton—the first died in 1619, the second in 1631—without once lighting upon the word, and am disposed to believe that it is found neither in one nor in the other; but, which is very much more noticeable, I have done this without lighting upon more than one or two passages where there was even the temptation, if the poet shrunk from the employment of 'its,' to employ any of the earlier substitutes; so that it is hardly too much to say that the whole fashion of their sentences must have been often shaped by a conscious or unconscious seeking to avoid the alternative necessities either of using, or else evidently finding a substitute for, this unwelcome little monosyllable. Dryden, I suppose, had no conscious scruple about employing it, and yet how rarely he did so, as compared with a modern writer under the same inducements, such a fact as this will remarkably attest, namely, that in his rendering of the second book of the Æneid, on which I made the experiment, 'its' occurs only three times, while in Conington's translation of the same no fewer times than twenty-six. We may further note that many who employ it, ever and anon fall back on 'his,'

or 'her' or 'thereof,' as though the newly-invented word did not exist. It is thus continually with Fuller, and, though not so often, with Jeremy Taylor. Thus the former in his *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, 1650, p. 401, speaking of Solomon's Temple: 'Twice was *it* pillaged by foreign foes, and four times by *her* own friends before the final destruction *thereof*.' He turns to 'thereof' for help ten times for once that 'its' finds allowance with him. And in Jeremy Taylor a construction such as the following is of not unfrequent occurrence: 'Death hath not only lost the sting, but *it* bringeth a coronet in *her* hand.'

How soon, with all this, the actual novelty of the word was forgotten is strikingly evidenced in the fact that when Dryden, in one of his fault-finding moods with the great men of the preceding generation, is taking Ben Jonson to task for general inaccuracy in his English diction, among other counts of his indictment, he quotes this line from *Catiline*,

> 'Though heaven should speak with all *his* wrath at once,'

and proceeds, '*heaven* is ill syntax with *his*;' while in fact till within forty or fifty years of the time when Dryden began to write, no other syntax was known; and to a much later date was exceedingly rare. Curious, too, is it to note that in the earnest controversy which followed on Chatterton's publication of the poems ascribed by him to the monk Rowley, who should have lived in

the fifteenth century, no one appealed to the following line,

'Life and all *its* goods I scorn,'

as at once deciding that the poems were not of the age which they pretended. Warton, who denied, though with some hesitation, the antiquity of the poems,* giving many and sufficient reasons for this denial, failed to take note of this little word, which betrayed the forgery at once.

I shall conclude this lecture with a few observations on this deliberate introduction of words to supply felt omissions in a language, and the limits within which this or any other conscious interference with its development is desirable or possible. Long before the time when a people begin to meditate upon their language, and become aware by a conscious reflective act either of its merits or defects, it has been fixed as regards structure in immutable forms; the sphere in which any alterations or modifications, addition to it, or subtraction from it, deliberately devised and carried out, are possible, is very limited indeed. The great laws that rule it are so firmly established that almost nothing can be taken from it, which it has got; almost nothing added to it, which it has *not* got. It will travel indeed in certain courses of change; but it would be as easy almost to alter the course of a planet as for man to alter these. This is sometimes a subject of regret with those who see what they believe

* *History of English Poetry*, vol. ii. p. 463, sqq.

manifest defects or blemishes in their language, and such as appear to them capable of remedy or removal. And yet in fact this is well; since for once that these redressers of real or fancied wrongs, these suppliers of things lacking, would mend, we may be tolerably confident that ten times, yea, a hundred times, they would mar; letting go that which would better be retained; retaining that which by a necessary law the language dismisses and lets go; and in manifold ways interfering with those processes of a natural logic, which are here evermore working themselves out. The genius of a language, unconsciously presiding over all its transformations, and conducting them to definite issues, will have been a far truer, far safer guide, than the artificial wit, however subtle, of any single man, or of any association of men. For the genius of a language is the sense and inner conviction entertained by all who speak it, of what it ought to be, and the means by which it will most nearly approach its ideal perfection; and while a pair of eyes, or two or three pair of eyes, may see much, yet millions of eyes will certainly see more.

It is only with the words, and not with the forms and laws of a language, that any interference is possible. Something, indeed much, may here be done by wise masters, in the rejecting of that which would deform, the allowing and adopting of that which will strengthen and enrich. Those who have set such objects before them, keeping within these necessary limits, have often effected

much. No language affords a better proof and illustration of this than the German. When the patriotic Germans began to wake up to a consciousness of the enormous encroachments which foreign languages, Latin, French, and Italian, had made on their native tongue, the lodgements which they had therein effected, and the danger which lay so near, that it should cease to be a language at all, but only a mingle-mangle, a variegated patchwork of many tongues, without any unity or inner coherence at all, various societies were instituted among them, at the beginning and during the course of the seventeenth century, for the recovering of what was lost of their own, for the expelling of that which had intruded upon it from abroad; and these with excellent effect.

But more effectual than these learned societies were the efforts of single writers, who in this merited eminently well of their country.* There are numerous words now accepted by the whole nation, in respect of which it is possible to designate the writer who first substituted them for some affected Gallicism or pedantic Latinism. Thus to Lessing his fellow-countrymen owe the substitution of 'zartgefühl' for 'delicatesse,' of 'empfindsamkeit' for 'sentimentalität,' of 'wesenheit' for 'essence.' Voss (1786) first employed 'alterthümlich' for

* There is an admirable Essay by Leibnitz with this view (*Opera*, vol. vi. part 2, pp. 6—51) in French and German, with this title, *Considérations sur la Culture et la Perfection de la Langue Allemande.*

'antik.' Wieland was the author or reviver of a multitude of excellent words, for some of which he had to do earnest battle at the first; such were 'seligkeit,' 'anmuth,' 'entzückung,' 'festlich,' 'entwirren,' with many more. For 'maskerade,' Campe would have fain substituted 'larventanz,' for 'ballet' 'schautanz,' for 'lauvine' 'schneesturz;' and Winkelman 'denkbild' for 'idee.' It was a novelty when Büsching called his great work on geography 'Erdbeschreibung' instead of 'Geographie;' while 'schnellpost' for 'diligence,' 'zerrbild' for 'carricatur' are also of recent introduction. Of 'wörterbuch' itself, Jacob Grimm tells us he can find no example dating earlier than 1719.

Some of these reformers, it must be owned, proceeded with more zeal than knowledge, while others did what in them lay to make the whole movement absurd—even as there ever hang on the skirts of a noble movement, be it in literature or politics or higher things yet, those who by extravagance and excess contribute their little all to bring ridicule and contempt upon it. Thus in the reaction against foreign interlopers, and in the zeal to rid the language of them, some would fain have disallowed words consecrated by longest use, and found native substitutes in their room; thus Campe, who in the main did good service here, desired to replace 'apostel' by 'lehrbote;' or they understood so little what words deserved to be called foreign, that they would fain have gotten rid of 'vater,' 'mutter,' 'wein,' 'fenster,' 'meister,'

'kelch;'* the three first belonging to the Gothic dialects by exactly the same right as they do to the Latin and the Greek; while the other three have been naturalized so long that to propose to expel them now is as though, having passed an Alien Act for the banishment of all foreigners, we should proceed to include under that name, and drive from the kingdom, the descendants of the French Protestants who found refuge here at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, or even of the Flemings who came over in the time of our Edwards. One notable enthusiast proposed to create an entirely new nomenclature for all the mythological personages of the Greek and Roman pantheons, who, one would think, might have been allowed, if any, to retain their Greek and Latin names. These, however, they were to exchange for equivalent German titles; Cupid was to be 'Lustkind,' Flora 'Bluminne,' Aurora 'Röthin;' instead of Apollo schoolboys were to speak of 'Singhold;' instead of Pan of 'Schaflieb;' instead of Jupiter of 'Helfevater,' with other similar absurdities. Let us beware (and the warning extends much further than to the matter in hand) of making a good cause ridiculous by our manner of supporting it, by taking for granted that exaggerations on one side can only be redressed by equal exaggerations upon the other.

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* Fuchs, *Zur Geschichte und Beurtheilung der Fremdwörter im Deutschen*, Dessau, 1842, pp. 85–91. Compare Jean Paul, *Æsthetik*, §§ 83–85.

LECTURE V.

DIMINUTIONS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

I OBSERVED in my last lecture but one that it is the essential character of a living language to be in flux and flow, to be gaining and losing; the words which constitute it as little continuing exactly the same, or in the same relations to one another, as do the atoms which at any moment make up our bodies remain for ever without subtraction or addition. As I then undertook for my especial subject to trace some of the acquisitions which our own language had made, I shall consider in this lecture and the following some of the losses, or at any rate diminutions, which it has endured. No one who has not given some attention to the subject, would at all imagine the enormous amount of both, of the increments and decrements alike, which in the tract of time it makes. It is of the latter we have now to speak.

It is certain that all languages must, or at least all languages do in the end, perish. They run their course; not all at the same rate, for the tendency to change is different in different languages, both from internal causes (mechanism and the like), and also from causes external to the language, laid in the varying velocities of social progress and social decline; but so it is, that, sooner or later, they

have all their youth, their manhood, their old age, their decrepitude, their final dissolution. Not indeed that they disappear, leaving no traces behind them, even when this last has arrived. On the contrary, out of their death a new life comes forth; they pass into other forms, the materials of which they were composed, more or less surviving still, are organized in new shapes and according to other laws of life. Thus, for example, the Latin perishes as a living language; and yet perishes only to live again, though under somewhat different conditions, in the four daughter languages, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese; or the six, if we count the Provençal and Wallachian. Still in their own proper being they pass away. There are dead records of what they were in books; not living men who speak them any more. Looking at them from another point of view, it would be correct to say of them not that they have died, but that they have put on immortality; but this is not the light in which we are regarding them now. Seeing then that they thus die, the germs of a possible decay and death must have been laid in them from the beginning.

Nor is this all; but in such strong built fabrics as these, the causes which thus bring about their final dissolution must have been actually at work very long before the results begin to be visible. Indeed, very often it is with them as with states, which, while in some respects they are knitting and strengthening, in others are already unfolding the seeds of their future and, it may be, still re-

mote overthrow. Equally in these and those, in states and in languages, it would be a serious mistake to assume that all up to a certain point and period is growth and gain, while all after is decay and loss. On the contrary, there are long periods during which growth in some directions is going hand in hand with decay in others; losses in one kind are being compensated, or more than compensated, by gains in another; during which a language changes, but only as the bud changes into the flower, and the flower into the fruit. A time indeed arrives when the growth and gains, becoming ever fewer, cease to constitute any longer a compensation for the losses and the decay, which are ever becoming more; when the forces of disorganization and death at work are stronger than those of life and order. It is from this moment the decline of a language may properly be dated. But until that crisis and turning point has arrived, we may be quite justified in speaking of the losses of a language, and may esteem them most real, without in the least thereby implying that its climacteric is passed, and its downward course begun. This may yet be far distant: and therefore when I dwell on certain losses and diminutions which our own has undergone or is undergoing, you will not suppose that I am presenting it to you as now travelling that downward course to dissolution and death. I have no such intention. If in some respects it is losing, in others it is gaining. Nor is everything which it lets go, a loss; for this too, the parting with a word in which there is no true

help, the dropping of a cumbrous or superfluous form, may itself be sometimes a most real gain. English is undoubtedly becoming different from what it has been; but only different in that it is passing into another stage of its development; only different, as the fruit is different from the flower, and the flower from the bud; not having in all points the same excellencies which it once had, but with excellencies as many and as real as it ever had; possessing, it may be, less of beauty, but more of usefulness; not, perhaps, serving the poet so well, but serving the historian and philosopher and theologian better than before.

With one observation more I will enter on the special details of my subject. It is this. The losses or diminutions of a language differ in one respect from the gains or acquisitions—namely, that those are of *two* kinds, while these are only of *one*. The gains are only in *words*; it never puts forth in the course of its later evolution a new *power*; it never makes for itself a new case, or a new tense, or a new comparative. But the losses are both in words and in *powers*. In addition to the words which it drops, it leaves behind it, as it travels onward, cases which it once possessed; renounces the employment of tenses which it once used; forgets its dual; is content with one termination both for masculine and feminine, and so on. Nor is this a peculiar feature of one language, but the universal rule in all. 'In all languages,' as has been well said, 'there is a constant tendency to relieve themselves of that precision which

chooses a fresh symbol for every shade of meaning, to lessen the amount of nice distinction, and detect as it were a royal road to the interchange of opinion.' For example, a vast number of languages had at an early period of their development, besides the singular and plural, a dual number, some even a trinal, which they have let go at a later. But what I mean by a language renouncing its powers I hope to make clearer in my next lecture. This much I have here said on the matter, to explain and justify a division which I propose to make, considering first the losses of the English language in *words*, and then in *powers*, that being my theme in the present lecture, and the other in one that will succeed it.

And first, there is going forward a continual extinction of the words in our language—as indeed in every other. When we ask ourselves what are the causes which have led to this, why in that great struggle for existence, which is going on here as in every other domain of life, this still makes part of the living army of words, while that has fallen dead, or been dismissed to drag out an obscure provincial existence; why oftentimes one word has been displaced by another, as it seems to us not better but worse; or, again, why certain families of words, or words formed after certain schemes and patterns, seem exposed to more than the ordinary chances of mortality, it is not always easy to give a satisfactory answer to these questions. Causes no doubt in every case there are. We can ascribe little, if indeed any-

thing here to mere hazard or caprice. Hazard might cause one man to drop the use of a word, but not a whole people to arrive at a tacit consent to employ it no more; while without this tacit consent it could not have become obsolete. Caprice, too, is an element which may be eliminated when we have to do with multitudes; for in such case the caprice of one will traverse and defeat the caprice of another, leaving matters very much where they were. But the causes oftentimes are hard to seek; they lie deep hidden in the genius of the language and in the tendencies of it at particular periods, these affecting speakers and writers who are quite unconscious of the influence thus exercised upon them.* Much here must remain unexplained, yet occasional suggestions of the causes which have led to the disuse of certain words or families of words I shall attempt, as I go forward, to offer.

When I spoke just now of the extinction of such a multitude of words, I did not refer merely to *tentative* words, candidates for admission into the language, offered to, but never in any true

* Dwight (*Modern Phonology*, 2nd series, p. 208): 'Great, silent, yet determinative laws of criticism, and so, of general acceptance or condemnation, are ever at work upon words, deciding their position among mankind at large, as if before a court without any appeal. Their action is certain, though undefinable to our vision, like the seemingly blind laws of the weather; which yet, however multiplied in their sources, or subtle in their action, rule infallibly not only the questions of human labour and of human harvests, but also, to a great extent, those of human health, power, and enjoyment.'

sense accepted by it; but to such as either belonged to its primitive stock, or, if not so, had yet been domiciled in it so long, that they seemed to have found there a lasting home. Thus not a few pure Anglo-Saxon words, some of these having lived on into the Elizabethan period or beyond it, have finally dropped out of our vocabulary; sometimes leaving a gap which has never since been filled; but their places oftener taken by others which have come up in their room. That beautiful word 'wanhope' for despair, or hope which has wholly *waned*, was in use down to the time which I have named; it occurs in the poems of Gascoigne, being the latest survivor of a whole family of words which continued much longer in Scotland than with us; of which some perhaps continue there still. These are but a few of them; 'wanthrift' for extravagance; 'wanluck,' misfortune; 'wanlust,' languor; 'wanwit,' folly; 'wangrace,' wickedness; 'wantrust' (Chaucer), distrust. 'Skinker' (no very graceful word), for cupbearer, is used by Shakespeare, and lasted to Dryden's time and beyond it. Spenser uses often 'to welk' (welken) as to fade, 'to sty' as to mount, 'to hery' as to glorify or praise, 'to halse' as to embrace, 'teene' as vexation or grief: Shakespeare 'to tarre' as to provoke, 'to sperr' as to enclose or bar in. Holland has 'specht' for woodpecker, or tree-jobber, as it used oftener to be called; 'reise' for journey, 'frimm' for lusty or strong. 'To shimmer' occurs in Bishop Hall; 'to tind,' surviving in 'tinder,' in Bishop Sander-

son; 'to nimm' (nehmen) in Fuller. 'Nesh,' soft through moisture, good Saxon-English once, still lives on in some of our provincial dialects, with not a few of the other words which I have just named. Thus 'leer' for empty, and 'heft,' that which needs an effort to heave up, used by Shakespeare, are common on the lips of our southern peasantry to this day.

A number of vigorous compounds we have lost and let go. But for Shakespeare we might have quite forgotten that young men of hasty fiery valour were once named 'hotspurs;' and this even now is rather the proper name of one than the designation of all.* Austere old men, such as in Falstaff's words 'hate us youth' were 'grimsirs' or 'grimsires' once (Massinger); a foe that wore the semblance of a friend, was a 'heavy friend' (Golding); a mischief-maker a 'coal-carrier;' a cockered favourite was a 'whiteboy' (Fuller); a drunkard an 'aleknight,' a 'malt-worm;' an old woman an 'old trot;' a soldier who of evil will (malin gré) shunned and shirked his share of duty and danger a 'malingerer'—the word is familiar enough to military men, but not in our dictionaries;—a sluggard a 'slowback;' an ignoble place of refuge a 'creephole' (Henry More); entertainments of song or music were 'earsports' (Holland), a hideous assemblage of all most discordant sounds a 'black sanctus,' pleasant drink

* See Holland, *Livy*, p. 922; Baxter, *Life and Times*, p. 39; Rogers, *Matrimonial Honour*, p. 233.

'merrygodown' (Golding), well-merited punishment 'whipping-cheer.' 'Double-diligent' was needlessly officious; 'snoutfair' an epithet applied to a woman who, having beauty, had no other gifts mental or moral to commend her; 'mother-naked' finds its explanation at Job i. 21. Who too but must acknowledge the beauty of such a phrase as 'weeping-ripe,' ready, that is, to burst into tears, the ἀρτίδακρυς of Euripides?

An almost unaccountable caprice seems often to preside over the fortunes of words, and to determine which should live and which die. Of them no less than of books it may be said, *habent sua fata.* Thus in instances out of number a word lives on as a verb, but has perished as a noun; we say 'to embarrass,' but no longer an 'embarrass;' 'to revile,' but not, with Chapman and Milton, a 'revile;' 'to dispose,' but not a 'dispose;' 'to retire,' but not a 'retire;' 'to wed,' but not a 'wed;' 'to infest,' but use no longer the adjective 'infest.' Or with a reversed fortune a word lives on as a noun, but has perished as a verb; thus as a noun substantive, a 'slug,' but no longer 'to slug' or render slothful; a 'child,' but no longer 'to child,' ('*childing* autumn,' Shakespeare); a 'rape,' but not 'to rape' (South); a 'rogue,' but not 'to rogue;' 'malice,' but not 'to malice;' a 'path,' but not 'to path;' or as a noun adjective, 'serene,' but not 'to serene,' a beautiful word, which we have let go, as the French have

'sereiner;'* 'meek,' but not 'to meek' (Wiclif); 'fond,' but not 'to fond' (Dryden); 'dead,' but not 'to dead;' 'intricate,' but 'to intricate' (Jeremy Taylor) no longer.

Or again, the affirmative remains, but the negative is gone; thus 'wisdom,' 'bold,' 'sad,' but not any more 'unwisdom,' 'unbold,' 'unsad' (all in Wiclif); 'cunning,' but not 'uncunning;' 'manhood,' 'wit,' 'mighty,' 'tall,' but not 'unmanhood,' 'unwit,' 'unmighty,' 'untall' (all in Chaucer); 'tame,' but not 'untame' (Jackson); 'buxom,' but not 'unbuxom' (Dryden); 'hasty,' but not 'unhasty' (Spenser); 'blithe,' but not 'unblithe;' 'idle,' but not 'unidle' (Sir P. Sidney); 'ease,' but not 'unease' (Hacket); 'repentance,' but not 'unrepentance;' 'remission,' but not 'irremission' (Donne); 'science,' but not 'nescience' (Glanvill); 'to know,' but not 'to unknow' (Wiclif); 'to give,' but not 'to ungive.' Or, with a curious variation from this, the negative survives, while the affirmative is gone; thus 'wieldy' (Chaucer) survives only in 'unwieldy;' 'couth' and 'couthly' (both in Spenser), only in 'uncouth' and 'uncouthly;' 'speakable' (Milton),

* How many words modern French has lost which are most vigorous and admirable, the absence of which can only now be supplied by a circumlocution or by some less excellent word—'Oseur,' 'affranchisseur' (Amyot), 'mépriseur,' 'murmurateur,' 'blandisseur' (Bossuet), 'abuseur' (Rabelais), 'désabusement,' 'rancœur,' are all obsolete at the present; and so 'désaimer,' to cease to love ('disamare' in Italian), 'guirlander,' 'stériliser,' 'blandissant,' 'ordonnément' (Montaigne), with innumerable others.

in 'unspeakable;' 'ruly' (Foxe), in 'unruly;' 'gainly' (Henry More) in 'ungainly;' these last two were serviceable words, and have been ill lost; 'gainly' is still common in the West Riding of Yorkshire; 'exorable' (Holland) and 'evitable' survive only in 'inexorable' and 'inevitable;' 'faultless' remains, but hardly 'faultful' (Shakespeare); 'semble' (Foxe), except as a technical law term, has disappeared, while 'dissemble' continues. So also of other pairs one has been taken, and one left; 'height,' or 'highth,' as Milton better spelt it, remains, but 'lowth' (Becon) is gone; 'righteousness,' or 'rightwiseness,' as once more accurately written, remains, but 'wrongwiseness' has been taken; 'inroad' continues, but 'outroad' (Holland) has disappeared; 'levant' lives, but 'ponent' (Holland) has died; 'to extricate' continues, but, as we saw just now, 'to intricate' does not; 'parricide,' but not 'filicide' (Holland). Again, of whole groups of words formed on some particular scheme it may be only a single specimen will survive. Thus 'gainsay' (=again say) survives; but 'gainstrive' (Foxe), 'gainstand,' 'gaincope' (Golding), and other similarly formed words exist no longer; 'praiseworthy,' 'trustworthy,' are the only survivors of a family that numbered once 'kissworthy' (Sidney), 'crownworthy' (Ben Jonson), 'deathworthy' (Shakespeare), 'painworthy' (Spenser), 'japeworthy' (Chaucer). In like manner 'foolhardy' alone remains out of at least five adjectives formed on the same pattern; thus 'foollarge,'

as expressive a word as prodigal, occurs in Chaucer, and 'foolhasty,' found also in him, lived on to the time of Holland; while 'foolhappy' is in Spenser; and 'foolbold' in Bale. 'Laughing-stock' we still use; but 'gazing-stock' (E. V.), 'jesting-stock' (Coverdale), 'mocking-stock' (Latimer), have all disappeared. 'Stedfast' remains, but 'shamefast,' 'rootfast,' 'bedfast' (=bedridden), 'homefast,' 'housefast,' 'masterfast' (Skelton), with others, are all gone. 'Exhort' remains; but 'dehort,' a word whose place 'dissuade' does not exactly supply, has escaped us. We have 'twilight,' but 'twibil' (=bipennis, Chapman) is extinct.

It is a real loss that the comparative 'rather' should now stand alone, having dropped alike its positive, 'rathe,' and superlative, 'rathest.' 'Rathe,' or early, though a graceful word, and not fallen quite out of popular remembrance, being embalmed in the *Lycidas* of Milton,

> 'And the *rathe* primrose, which forsaken dies,

might be suffered to share the common lot of so many others which have perished, though worthy to live; but the disuse of 'rathest' is a real loss to the language, and the more so, that 'liefest' is gone too. 'Rather' expresses the Latin 'potius;' but 'rathest' being out of use, we have no word, unless 'soonest' may be accepted as such, to express 'potissimum,' or the preference not of one way over another or over certain others, but of one over all; which we therefore effect by aid of various circumlocutions. Nor has 'rathest' been

so long out of use, that it would be hopeless to attempt to revive it. Sanderson, in his beautiful sermon on the text, 'When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up,' puts the consideration, 'why father and mother are named the *rathest*, and the rest to be included in them.'*

I observed just now that words formed on certain patterns had a tendency to fall into desuetude, that they were evidently exposed to more than the ordinary chances of mortality. It has been thus with adjectives ending in 'some,' the Anglo-Saxon and early English 'sum,' the German 'sam' ('friedsam,' 'seltsam'). It is true that of these many survive, as 'gladsome,' 'handsome,' 'wearisome,' 'buxom' ('bucksome,' in our earlier writers, its present spelling disguising its true character, and the family to which it belongs; being the same word as the German 'beugsam' or 'biegsam,' bendable, compliant); but of these far more than a rateable proportion are quite or nearly extinct. Thus 'wansum' is in the *Story of Genesis* for sorrowful; while in Wiclif's Bible you might note 'lovesum,' 'hatesum,' 'lustsum,' 'gilsum' (guilesome), 'wealsum,' 'heavysum,' 'lightsum,' 'delightsum;' of these 'lightsome' long survived, and indeed still survives in provincial dialects; but of the others all save 'delightsome' are gone; and that, although used in our Autho-

* For other passages in which 'rathest' occurs see the *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 92, 170.

rized Version (Mal. iii. 12), is now only employed in poetry. So too 'mightsome' (see Coleridge's *Glossarial Index*), 'brightsome' (Marlowe), 'wieldsome,' 'unwieldsome' (Golding), 'unlightsome' (Milton), 'healthsome' (*Homilies*), 'ugsome' and 'ugglesome' (both in Foxe), 'laboursome' (Shakespeare), 'friendsome,' 'longsome' (Bacon), 'quietsome,' 'mirksome' (both in Spenser), 'toothsome' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'gleesome,' 'joysome' (both in Browne's *Pastorals*), 'gaysome' (*Mirror for Magistrates*), 'likesome' (Holinshed), 'roomsome,' 'bigsome,' 'awsome,' 'timersome,' 'winsome,' 'viewsome,' 'dosome' (=prosperous), 'flaysome' (=fearful), 'auntersome' (=adventurous), 'clamorsome' (all these still surviving in the North), 'playsome' (employed by the historian Hume), 'lissome,' 'meltsome,' 'heedsome,' 'laughsome,' 'clogsome,' 'fearsome,' have nearly or quite disappeared from our English speech. More of them have held their ground in Scotland than in the south of the Island.*

Nor can it be mere accident that of a group of depreciatory and contemptuous words ending in 'ard,' more than one half should have dropped out of use; I refer to that group of which 'dotard,' 'laggard,' 'braggard' (now spelt 'braggart'), 'sluggard,' 'buzzard,' 'bastard,' 'wizard,' may be taken as surviving specimens; while 'blinkard' (*Homilies*), 'dizzard' (Burton), 'dullard' (Udal), 'musard' (Chaucer), 'trichard' (*Political Songs*),

* Thus see in Jamieson's *Dictionary* 'bangsome,' 'freaksome,' drysome,' 'grousome,' with others out of number.

'haskard,' 'shreward' (Robert of Gloucester), 'ballard' (a bald-headed man, Wiclif); 'puggard,' 'stinkard' (Ben Jonson), 'haggard' (a worthless hawk), are extinct.

Thus too there is a curious province of our vocabulary, in which we were once so rich, that extensive losses have failed to make us poor. I refer to those double words which either contain within themselves a strong rhyming modulation, such, for example, as 'willy-nilly,' 'hocus-pocus,' 'helter-skelter,' 'tag-rag,' 'namby-pamby,' 'pell-mell,' 'hab-nab,' 'hodge-podge;'* or, with a slight difference from this, those whose characteristic feature is not this internal likeness with initial unlikeness, but initial likeness with internal unlikeness; not rhyming, but strongly alliterative, and in every case with a change of the interior vowel from a weak into a strong, generally from 'i' into 'a' or 'o'; as 'shilly-shally,' 'mingle-mangle,' 'tittle-tattle,' 'prittle-prattle,' 'riff-raff,' 'see-saw,' 'slip-slop.' No one who is not quite out of love with the homelier portions of the language, but

* The same pleasure in a swiftly recurring rhyme has helped to form such phrases as these, 'scot and lot,' 'top and lop,' 'creep and leap,' 'rape and scrape,' 'draff and chaff,' 'shame and blame.' Fairly numerous in English, there are far more of them in German; thus 'gut und blut,' 'lug und trug,' 'hege und pflege,' 'saus und braus,' 'rath und that,' 'tritt und schritt,' 'schutz und trutz,' 'sack und pack,' 'weit und breit,' 'band und rand,' 'dach und fach,' 'sichten und richten,' 'handel und wandel,' 'schalten und walten,' 'leben und weben.' For some earlier and mainly juristic forms of the like kind see Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, p. 13.

will acknowledge the life and strength which there is often in these and in others still current among us. But of this sort what vast numbers have fallen out of use, some so fallen out of all remembrance that it may be difficult to find credence for them. Thus take of rhyming the following: 'hugger-mugger,' 'hurly-burly,' 'kicksy-wicksy' (all in Shakespeare); 'hibber-gibber,'* 'rusty-dusty,' 'horrel-lorrel,' 'slaump-paump' (all in Gabriel Harvey), 'royster-doyster' (*Old Play*), 'hoddy-doddy' (Ben Jonson); while of alliterative might be instanced these: 'skimble-skamble,' 'bibble-babble' (both in Shakespeare), 'twittle-twattle,' 'kim-kam' (both in Holland), 'trim-tram,' 'trish-trash,' 'swish-swash' (all in Gabriel Harvey), 'whim-wham' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'mizz-mazz' (Locke), 'snip-snap' (Pope), 'flim-flam' (Swift), 'tric-trac,' and others.

Again, there is a whole family of words,—many of them are now under ban,—which seemed at one time to be formed almost at pleasure, the only condition being that the combination should be a happy one. I refer to those singularly expressive words formed by a combination of verb and sub-

* *A Dictionary of Reduplicated Words in the English Language* by Henry B. Wheatley, published as an appendix to *The Transactions of the Philological Society*, 1865, contains nearly six hundred of these words, and the collector believes that there are some hundreds more which he has not come across. I very much doubt whether he has left any such gleaning to those who follow him. I have lighted upon several, in what seemed to me out of the way corners of English literature, but have invariably found them duly registered by him.

stantive, the former governing the latter; as 'telltale,' 'scapegrace,' 'turncoat,' 'turntail,' 'skinflint,' 'spendthrift,' 'spitfire,' 'lickspittle,' 'daredevil' (=wagehals), 'makebate' (=störenfried), 'marplot,' 'killjoy.' These, with some others, have held their ground, and are still more or less in use; but how many are forgotten; and yet, though not always elegant, they preserved some of the most genuine and vigorous idioms of the language.* Nor is this strange; they are almost all words of abuse, and the abusive words of a language are invariably among the most picturesque and imaginative which it possesses. The whole man speaks out in them, and often the man under the influence of passion and excitement, which always lend force and fire to his speech. Let me of these recount a few; 'smellfeast,'—it may remind us of the Greek τρεχέδειπνος,—if not a better, is a more graphic, word than our foreign parasite; 'clawback' (Hacket) is stronger, if not more graceful, than flatterer or sycophant; 'tosspot' (Fuller), or less frequently 'reelpot' (Middleton), 'swillpot' (Cotgrave), tell their tale as well as drunkard; and 'pinchpenny' (Holland), or 'nipfarthing' (Drant), as well as or better than

* Many languages have groups of words formed upon the same scheme, although, singularly enough, they are altogether absent from the Anglo-Saxon (Grimm, *Deutsche Gramm.*, vol. ii. p. 976); the Spanish for example. A vaunting braggart is a 'matamoros,' a 'slaymoor;' he is a 'matasiete,' a 'slayseven;' a 'perdonavidas,' a 'sparelives.' Others may be added to these, as 'azotacalles,' 'picapleytos,' 'saltaparedes,' 'rompeesquinas,' 'ganapan,' 'cascatreguas.' So in French, 'attiscfeu,' 'coupegorge,' 'vaurien.'

miser. 'Spintext,' 'lacklatin,' 'mumblematins,' were all applied to ignorant clerics; 'bitesheep' (a favourite word with Foxe), to bishops who were rather wolves tearing, than shepherds feeding, the flock; 'slipstring' (=pendard, Beaumont and Fletcher), 'slipgibbet,' 'scapegallows,' were all names given to those who, however they might have escaped, were justly owed to the gallows, and might still, as our common people say, 'go up stairs to bed.'

How many of these words occur in Shakespeare. The following list makes no pretence to completeness; 'martext,' 'carrytale,' 'pleaseman,' 'sneakcup,' 'mumblenews,' 'wantwit,' 'lackbrain,' 'lackbeard,' 'lacklove,' 'ticklebrain,' 'cutpurse,' 'cutthroat,' 'crackhemp,' 'breedbate,' 'swingebuckler,' 'pickpurse,' 'pickthank,' 'picklock,' 'scarecrow,' 'breakvow,' 'breakpromise,' 'findfault,' 'choplogic,' 'makepeace'—this last and 'telltruth' (Fuller) being the only ones in the whole collection, wherein reprobation or contempt is not implied. Nor is the list exhausted yet; there are further 'dingthrift' (=prodigal, Herrick), 'wastegood,' 'spendall' (both in Cotgrave), 'stroygood' (Golding), 'scattergood,' 'wastethrift' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'scapethrift,' 'swashbuckler' (both in Holinshed), 'shakebuckler,' 'rinsepitcher' (both in Becon), 'crackrope' (Howell), 'waghalter,' 'wagfeather' (both in Cotgrave), 'blabtale' (Hacket), 'getnothing' (Adams), 'tearthroat' (Gayton), 'spitpoison' (South), 'spitvenom,' 'marprelate,' 'nipcheese,' 'nipscreed,' 'killman' (Chapman), 'lackland,' 'pickquarrel,'

'pickfault,' 'pickpenny' (Henry More), 'makefray' (Bishop Hall), 'makedebate' (Richardson's *Letters*), 'kindlecoal,' 'kindlefire' (both in Gurnall), 'turntippet' (Cranmer), 'swillbowl' (Stubbs), 'smellsmock,' 'cumberworld' (Drayton), 'curryfavor,' 'pinchfist,' 'suckfist,' 'hatepeace' (Sylvester), 'hategood' (Bunyan), 'clutchfist,' 'sharkgull' (both in Middleton), 'makesport' (Fuller), 'hangdog' ('Herod's *hangdogs* in the tapestry,' Pope), 'catchpoll,' 'makeshift' (used not impersonally, as now), 'pickgoose' ('the bookworm was never but a *pickgoose*'), 'killcow' (these three last in Gabriel Harvey), 'rakeshame' (Milton, prose), with others which it will be convenient to omit. 'Rakehell,' which used to be spelt 'rakel' or 'rakle' (Chaucer), a good English word, would be wrongly included in this list, although Cowper, when he writes 'rakehell' ('*rake-hell* baronet')* evidently regarded it as belonging to this group.†

* I regret by too much brevity to have here led astray Dr. G. Schneider, who has written a *History of the English Language*, Freiburg, 1863, and done me the honour to transfer with slight acknowledgement whatever he found useful in my little book to his own. He has at p. 159, this wonderful paragraph: 'Rakehell bedeutete ehemals baronet; bald verband sich damit der Begriff von "wohllebender Mensch;" und da derjenige, welcher mehr an's Wohlleben denkt, leicht ein Wohllüstling wird, ging die anfangs gute Bedeutung in diese letztere über; der Ausdruck ward desshalb aufgegeben, um nicht mit dem Gedanken an baronet stets die Idee von einem ausschweifenden wohllüstigen Menschen zu verbinden.'

† The mistake is far earlier; long before Cowper wrote the sound suggested first this sense, and then this spelling. Thus Stanihurst, *Description of Ireland*, p. 28: 'They are taken for no better than *rakehels*, or *the devil's black guard;*' and often elsewhere.

There is another frequent cause of the disuse of words. In some inexplicable way there comes to be attached something of ludicrous, or coarse, or vulgar to them, out of a sense of which they are no longer used in earnest writing, and fall out of the discourse of those who desire to speak elegantly. Not indeed that this degradation which overtakes words is in all cases inexplicable. The unheroic character of most men's minds, with their consequent intolerance of that heroic which they cannot understand, is constantly at work, too often with success, in taking down words of nobleness from their high pitch; and, as the most effectual way of doing this, in casting an air of mock-heroic about them. Thus 'to dub,' a word resting on one of the noblest usages of chivalry, has now something of ludicrous about it; so too has 'doughty.' They belong to that serio-comic, mock-heroic diction, the multiplication of which, as of all parodies on greatness, and the favour with which this is received, is evermore a sign of evil augury for a nation, is at present such a sign of evil augury for our own.

'Pate' is now comic or ignoble; it was not so once; as is plain from its occurrence in the Psalms (Ps. vii. 17); as little was 'noddle,' which occurs in one of the few poetical passages in Hawes. The same may be affirmed of 'sconce,' of 'nowl' or 'noll' (Wiclif); of 'slops' for trousers (Marlowe's *Lucan*); of 'cocksure' (Rogers), of 'smug,' which once meant adorned ('the *smug* bridegroom,' Shakespeare). 'To nap' is now a

word without dignity; while yet in Wiclif's Bible we read, 'Lo He schall not *nappe*, nether slepe that kepeth Israel' (Ps. cxxi. 4). 'To punch,' 'to thump,' both which, and in serious writing, occur in Spenser, could not now obtain the same use; as little 'to wag,' or 'to buss,' both which Shakespeare employs. Neither would any one now say with Wiclif that at Lystra Barnabas and Paul 'rent their clothes and *skipped out* among the people' (Acts xiv. 14); nor yet that 'the Lord *trounced* Sisera and all his host' as it stands in the Bible of 1551. 'A *sight* of angels' (see Tyndale's Bible at Heb. xii. 22), would be felt as a vulgarism now. 'A *blubbered* face' (Spenser) would scarcely appeal to our pity. We should not call now a delusion of Satan a '*flam* of the devil' (Henry More); nor our Lord's course through the air to the pinnacle of the temple 'his aery *jaunt*' (Milton). It is the same with phrases. 'Through thick and thin,' occurring in Spenser, 'cheek by jowl' in Dubartas, do not now belong to serious literature. In the glorious ballad of *Chevy Chase*, a noble warrior whose legs are hewn off, is described as 'in doleful dumps;' just as, in Holland's *Livy*, the Romans are 'in the dumps' after their disastrous defeat at Cannæ. In Golding's *Ovid*, one fears that he will 'go to pot.' In one of the beautiful letters of John Careless, preserved in Foxe's *Martyrs*, he announces that a persecutor, who expects a recantation from him, is 'in the wrong box.' And in the sermons of Barrow, who certainly did not seek familiar, still less vulgar,

expressions, we constantly meet such terms as 'to rate,' 'to snub,' 'to gull,' 'to pudder,' 'dumpish,' and the like; words we may be sure not vulgar when he used them.

Then too the advance of refinement causes words to be dismissed, which are felt to speak too plainly. It is not here merely that one age has more delicate ears than another; and that subjects are freely spoken of at one time which at another are withdrawn from conversation. This is something; but besides this, and even if this delicacy were at a standstill, there would still be a continual disallowing of words, which for a certain while have been employed to designate coarse or disagreeable facts or things; or, if not a disallowing, a relinquishing to the lower classes of society, with the adoption of others in their stead. The former being felt by long use to have come into too direct and close relation with what they designate, to summon it up too distinctly before the mind's eye, they are thereupon exchanged for others, which, at first at least, indicate more lightly and allusively the offensive thing, rather hint and suggest than paint and describe it: although by and bye these new will in their turn be discarded, and for exactly the same reasons which brought about the dismissal of those which they themselves superseded. It lies in the necessity of things that I must leave this part of my subject, curious as it is, without illustration;* but no one, even mode-

* As not, however, turning on a *very* coarse matter, and illustrating the subject with infinite wit and humour, I might refer

rately acquainted with the early literature of the Reformation, can be ignorant of words having free course there, which now are not merely coarse, and as such under ban, but which no one would employ who did not mean to speak impurely and vilely.

I spoke in a former lecture of the many words which have come back to us after a temporary absence, and of the extent to which the language has been reinforced and recruited by these. I cannot but think, in view of this disposition of theirs to return, in view also of the havoc which as we have seen various causes are evermore effecting in the ranks of a language, that much might be done by writers of authority and influence in the way of bringing back deserters, where they are capable of yielding good service still, and placing them in the ranks again; still more in that of detaining words, which, finding no honourable employment, seem more or less disposed to be gone, though they have not as yet actually disappeared. This would be less difficult from the fact that in almost every instance these words, obsolete or obsolescent, which our literary English knows of, or is about to know of, no more, live on, as has been already noted, in one or more of our provincial

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the Spanish scholar to the discussion between Don Quixote and his squire on the dismissal of 'regoldar,' from the language of good society, and the substitution of 'erutar' in its room (*Don Quixote*, 4. 7. 43). In a letter of Cicero to Pætus (*Fam.* ix. 22) there is a subtle and interesting disquisition on the philosophy of these forbidden words.

dialects; they need not therefore, as dead, that life should be breathed into them anew; but only, as having retired into obscurity for a while, that they should be drawn forth from this obscurity again. Of these words there are multitudes. If I instance a very few, it is not as specially recommending them for rehabilitation, though I think some of them worthy of it, and capable of good service still; but as showing to what kind of work I invite.

And let me here observe by the way that to poets, though not exclusively, yet mainly, this task must be committed. 'That high-flying liberty of conceit' which is proper to them will justify liberties on their part which would be denied to the writer of unimpassioned prose.* It is felt by all that with such a work as there is before them, they have a right to all the assistances which the language strained to the uttermost is capable of yielding. This liberty Tennyson more than once has used. Thus 'to burgeon' had pretty nearly disappeared from the language since the time of Dryden. Tennyson has on several occasions employed it. And yet it is not the poet only to whom such a privilege is conceded. The verb 'to hearten' was as good as dead till Mr. Grote in his *History of Greece* gave it life again. 'To sagg,' a Shakespearian word, is alive everywhere in England, except in our literary dialect; a tired horse

* Jean Paul (*Æsthetik*, § 83): Ueberhaupt bildet und nährt die Prose ihre Sprachkraft an der Poesie, denn diese muss immer mit neuen Federn steigen, wenn die alten, die ihren Flügeln ausfallen, die Prose zum Schreiben nimmt. Wie diese aus Dichtkunst entstand, so wächst sie auch an ihr.

'saggs' its head; an ill-hung gate 'saggs' on its hinges. It seems to me too expressive a word to be allowed to disappear from among us. 'To gaster' and 'to flayte,'—they are synonyms, but the first is rather to terrify, and the second to scare,—are frequent in the Puritan writers of East Anglia; so is 'to fellow-feel;' the two former are living still upon the lips of the people. Perhaps 'to fleck' as to spot or stain, is not gone; nor yet 'to shimmer;' but both are certainly in danger of going. Coleridge supposed that he had invented 'aloofness.' It is well worthy of acceptance; but if it has been accepted, which is not yet perfectly clear, he only revived a word current two hundred years ago. 'Litherness,' as expressing a want of moral backbone in the character, is a word which has gone without leaving a substitute behind it. 'Elfishness' has done the same.

'Damish' (Rogers) applied in blame to proud imperious women, 'wearish' in the sense of small, weak, shrunken (thus, 'a wearish old man,' Burton), 'masterous' or 'maistrous,' as Milton spells it, in that of overbearing, 'afterwitted,' applied by Tyndale to one who has what the French now call *l'esprit de l'escalier*, who always remembers what he should have said when he has left the room and it is too late to say it, with numberless others which it would be easy to cite, may each of them singly be no great loss, but when these losses may be counted by hundreds and thousands, they are a serious impoverishment of our language; and assuredly it would not be impossible to

win some of these back again. There are others, such as Baxter's 'wordwarriors,' applied to those whose strife is only about words, as Lord Brooke's 'bookhunger,' as 'realmrape' (= usurpation, *Mirror for Magistrates*), as 'to witwanton' (Fuller warns men that they do not 'witwanton' with God), 'to cankerfret' ('sin cankerfrets the soul,' Rogers), which, though never popular, seem to me happier than that they should be allowed to die.

We have to thank the American branch of the English-speaking race that we have not lost 'freshet' (an exquisite word and used by Milton), 'snag,' 'bluff,' 'kedge,' 'slick,'* 'to whittle,' 'to cave in,' 'to rile,' 'to snarl' (that is, to entangle). They are often counted as American inventions, but are indeed nothing of the kind. There is scarcely one of them, of which examples could not be found in our earlier literature, and in provincial dialects they are current every one to this present day.† Even 'the fall' as equivalent to the autumn is not properly American. It is as old as Dryden,‡ and older.

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* 'Slick' is indeed only another form of 'sleek.' Thus Fuller (*Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, vol. ii. p. 190): 'Sure I am this city [the New Jerusalem] as presented by the prophet, was fairer, finer, *slicker*, smoother, more exact, than any fabric the earth afforded.'

† See Nall, *Dialect and Provincialisms of East Anglia*, s. vv.

‡ 'What crowds of patients the towndoctor kills,
Or how last *fall* he raised the weekly bills.'

On this matter of American English compare a very interesting paper, with the title, 'Inroads upon English,' in *Blackwood's Magazine*, Oct. 1867, p. 399, sqq.

But besides these deserters which might again be recalled, some of them at least, with great advantage to the ranks, there are other words, which have never found a place in our literary English, that yet might be profitably adopted into it. A time arrives for a language, when, apart from the recoveries I have been speaking of just now, its own local and provincial dialects are almost the only source from which it can derive additions, such as shall really constitute an increase of its wealth; while yet such additions from one quarter or another are most needful, if it is not daily to grow poorer, if it is to find any compensations for the waste which is evermore going forward of the wealth that in time past it possessed. We have seen how words wear out, become unserviceable, how the glory that they once had departs, as the light fades from the hills; how they drop away from the stock and stem of the language as dead leaves from their parent tree; so that others must supply their place, if the foliage is not to grow sparser and thinner every day.

Before however we turn to the dialects as likely to yield us here any effectual help, we must form a juster estimate of what these really are, than is commonly entertained. A word or two may be spoken here for the rescuing of these from that unmerited contempt and neglect with which they are by too many regarded. We all of us too often think of a dialect, as though it were a debased, distorted, and vulgarized form of the classical language; all its departures from this as violations

of grammar, or wrongs which in one kind or another it has suffered from the uneducated and illiterate who mainly speak it. But it is nothing of the kind. It may not have our grammar, but it has a grammar of its own. If it have here and there a distorted or mutilated word, much oftener what we esteem such is very far from so being, embodies rather some curious fact in the earlier history of the language. A dialect is one of the many forms in which a language once existed, but one which, as a lively French writer expresses it, has had misfortunes,* which at any rate has not had the good fortune that befell High German in Germany, Castilian in Spain, Tuscan in Italy, that namely of being elevated above its competitors to the dignity of the classical language of the land in which it and they are spoken; a dialect which has not therefore received the develop-

* Sainte-Beuve: Je définis un patois, une ancienne langue qui a eu des malheurs. Littré (*Hist. de la Langue Française*, vol. ii. p. 93): Les faits de langue abondent dans les patois. Parce qu'ils offrent parfois un mot de la langue littéraire estropié ou quelque perversion manifeste de la syntaxe régulière, on a été porté à conclure que le reste est à l'avenant, et qu'ils sont, non pas une formation indépendante et originale, mais une corruption de l'idiome cultivé qui, tombé en des bouches mal apprises, y subit tous les supplices de la distorsion. Il n'en est rien; quand on ôte ces taches peu nombreuses et peu profondes, on trouve un noyau sain et entier. Ce serait se faire une idée erronée que de considérer un patois comme du français altéré; il n'y a eu aucun moment où ce que nous appelons aujourd'hui le français ait été uniformément parlé sur toute la surface de la France; et, par conséquent, il n'y a pas eu de moment non plus où il ait pu s'altérer chez les paysans et le peuple des villes pour devenir un patois.

ment and elaboration which have been the portion of its more fortunate rival; but which, I will add, may at the same time have retained a freedom and a freshness which the other has in good measure forgone and lost.*

Of its words, idioms, turns of speech, many which we are ready to set down as vulgarisms, solecisms of speech, violations of the primary rules of grammar, often do no more than attest that those who employ them have not kept abreast with the advance of the language and onward march of the national mind. The usages are only local in the fact that, having once been employed by the great body of the

* Littré (*Hist. de la Langue Française*, vol. ii. p. 130): Un patois n'a pas d'écrivains qui le fixent, dans le sens où l'on dit que les bons auteurs fixent une langue; un patois n'a pas les termes de haute poésie, de haute éloquence, de haut style, vu qu'il est placé sur un plan où les sujets qui comportent tout cela ne lui appartiennent plus. C'est ce qui lui donne une apparence de familiarité naïve, de simplicité narquoise, de rudesse grossière, de grâce rustique. Mais, sous cette apparence, qui provient de sa condition même, est un fonds solide de bon et vieux français, qu'il faut toujours consulter. Schleicher (*Die Deutsche Sprache*, p. 110): Die Mundarten nun sind die natürlichen, nach den Gesetzen der sprachgeschichtlichen Veränderungen gewordenen Formen der deutschen Sprache, im Gegensatze zu der mehr oder minder gemachten und schulmeisterisch geregelten und zugestutzten Sprache der Schrift. Schon hieraus folgt der hohe Werth derselben für die wissenschaftliche Erforschung unserer Sprache; hier ist eine reiche Fülle von Worten und Formen, die, an sich gut und echt, von der Schriftsprache verschmäht würden; hier finden wir manches, was wir zur Erklärung der älteren Sprachdenkmale, ja zur Erkenntniss der jetzigen Schriftsprache verwerthen können, abgesehen von dem sprachgeschichtlichen, dem lautphysiologischen Interesse, welches die überaus reiche Mannigfaltigkeit unserer Mundarten bietet.

English-speaking race, they have now receded from the lips of all except those in some certain country districts, who have been more faithful than others to the traditions of the past. There are parts of England where for 'we sing' 'ye sing' 'they sing,' they decline their plurals, 'we singen' 'ye singen' 'they singen.' This was not indeed the original plural, but was that form of it which, coming up about Chaucer's time, was dying out in Spenser's. He indeed constantly employs it,* but after him it becomes ever rarer in our

* It must be owned that Spenser does not fairly represent the language of his time, or indeed of any time, affecting as he does a certain artificial archaism both of words and forms. Some call in question the justice of this charge, and will fain have it that he does but write the oldest English of his time. I cannot so regard it. Jonson, born only twenty years later, could not have been mistaken; and with all its severity there is a truth in his observation, 'Spenser, in affecting the ancients, writ no language.' And Daniel, born some ten years later, implicitly repeats the charge:

> 'Let others sing of knights and Paladins
> In *aged* accents and *untimely* words.'

See too the remarkable Epistle prefixed by the anonymous Editor to his *Shepherd's Calendar*, where the writer glories in the archaic character of the author, on whom he is annotating. In the matter, however, which is treated above Ben Jonson was at one with him, himself expressing a strong regret that these flexions had not been retained. 'The persons plural,' he says (*English Grammar*, c. 17), 'keep the termination of the first person singular. In former times, till about the reign of King Henry VIII., they were wont to be formed by adding *en*; thus, *loven*, *sayen*, *complainen*. But now (whatsoever is the cause) it hath quite grown out of use, and that other so generally prevailed, that I dare not presume to set this afoot again; albeit (to tell you my opinion) I am persuaded that the lack hereof, well considered, will be found a great blemish to our tongue. For seeing *time*

literary English. In the *Homilies* I have met it once, and even so late as in Fuller; but in his time it quite disappears.

Now of those who retain such forms you should esteem not that they violate the laws of the language, but that they have taken their *permanent* stand at that which was only a point of transition for it, and which it has now overlived. A countryman will nowadays say, 'He made me *afeard*,' or, 'The price of corn *ris* last market day,' or 'I will *axe* him his name;' or 'I tell *ye*,' and you will be tempted to set these phrases down as barbarous English. They are not such at all; in one sense they are quite as good English as 'He made me *afraid*;' or 'The price of corn *rose* last market day;' or 'I will *ask* him his name.' 'Afeard' is the regular participle of an Anglo-Saxon verb 'a-færan,' as 'afraid' of 'to affray;' 'ris' or 'risse' is an old preterite of 'to rise;' 'to axe' is not a mispronunciation of 'to ask,' but the constant form which in earlier English the verb assumed; in Tyndale's translation of the Scriptures you will find no other. There was a time when 'ye' was an accusative, and to use it as a nominative or vocative, the only permitted uses at present, would have been incorrect. Even such a phrase as 'Put *them* things away,' is not bad, but only antiquated English.* You are not

and *person* be as it were the right and left hand of a verb, what can the maiming bring else, but a lameness to the whole body?'

* Génin (*Récréations Philologiques*, vol. i. p. 71) says to the same effect: 'Il n'y a guères de faute de Français, je dis faute

indeed therefore to conclude that these forms are open to you to employ, or that they would be good English now. They would not; being departures from that present use and custom, which must be our standard in what we speak and write; just as in our buying and selling we must use the current coin of the realm, not attempt to pass that which long since has been called in, whatever intrinsic value it may possess.

The same may be asserted of certain ways of pronouncing words, not now in use, except among the lower classes; thus, 'contrárу,' 'mischiévous,' 'blasphémous,' instead of 'cóntrary,' 'míschievous,' 'blásphemous.' It would be easy to show by quotations from our poets that these are no mispronunciations, but only the retention of an

générale, accréditée, qui n'ait sa raison d'être, et ne pût au besoin produire ses lettres de noblesse; et souvent mieux en règle que celles des locutions qui ont usurpé leur place au soleil.' The French Academy, in the Preface to the last edition of the *Dictionnaire Historique de la Langue Française*, p. xv., has some excellent remarks in respect of acts of similar injustice, into which in our judgment of old authors, and trying the past by the rules of the present, we are in danger of falling: 'Ces écrivains y seront quelquefois défendus contre d'indiscrètes critiques, qui leur ont reproché comme des fautes de langage ce qui n'était que l'emploi légitime de la langue de leur temps. A chaque époque s'établissent des habitudes, des conventions, des règles même, auxquelles n'ont pu assurément se conformer par avance les écrivains des époques antérieures, et qu'il n'est ni juste ni raisonnable de leur opposer, comme s'il s'agissait de ces premiers principes dont l'autorité est absolue et universelle. C'est pourtant en vertu de cette jurisprudence rétroactive qu'ont été condamnées, chez d'excellents auteurs, des manières de parler alors admises, et auxquelles un long abandon n'a pas toujours enlevé ce qu'elles avaient de grâce et de vivacité.'

earlier pronunciation by the people, after the higher classes have abandoned it.* And let me here say how well worth your while it will prove to watch for provincial words and inflections, local idioms and modes of pronunciation. Count nothing in this kind beneath your notice. Do not at once ascribe any departure from what you have been used to, either in grammar, or pronunciation, or meaning ascribed to words, to the ignorance or stupidity of the speaker. If you hear 'nuncheon,'†

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* A single proof may in each case suffice:

'Our wills and fates do so *contrary* run.'—*Shakespeare.*
'Ne let *mischievous* witches with their charms.'—*Spenser.*
'O argument *blasphemous*, false and proud.'—*Milton.*

† This form, which our country people in Hampshire always employ, either retains the original pronunciation, our received one being a modern corruption; or else, as is more probable, *we* have confounded two different words, from which confusion they have kept clear. In Howell's *Vocabulary*, 1659, and in Cotgrave's *French and English Dictionary*, both words occur: 'nuncion or nuncheon, the afternoon's repast,' (cf. *Hudibras*, i. 1, 346: 'They took their breakfasts or their *nuncheons*'), and 'lunchion, a big piece,' *i.e.* of bread; both giving 'caribot,' which has this meaning, as the French equivalent; and compare Gay:

'When hungry thou stood'st staring like an oaf,
I sliced the *luncheon* from the barley loaf;'

and Miss Baker (*Northamptonshire Glossary*) explains 'lunch' as 'a large lump of bread, or other edible; "He helped himself to a good *lunch* of cake."' This 'nuntion' may possibly help us to the secret of the word. Richardson notes that it is spelt 'noon-shun' in Browne's *Pastorals*, which must suggest as plausible, if nothing more, that the 'nuntion' was originally the labourer's slight meal, to which he withdrew for the *shunning* of the heat of *noon*: above all when in Lancashire we find 'noon-scape,' and in Norfolk 'noon-miss,' for the time when labourers rest after dinner. The dignity at which 'lunch' or 'luncheon'

do not at once set it down for a malformation of 'luncheon,' nor 'yeel'* of 'eel.' Lists and collections of provincial usage, such as I have suggested, always have their value. If you cannot turn them to profit yourselves, and they may not stand in close enough connection with your own studies for this, there always are those who will thank you for them; and to whom the humblest of these collections, carefully and conscientiously made, will be in one way or other of real assistance.† And there is the more need to urge this at the present, because, notwithstanding the tenacity with which our country folk cling to their old forms and usages, still these must now be rapidly growing fewer; and there are forces, moral and material, at work in England, which will probably cause that of those which now survive the greater part will within the next fifty years have disappeared. Many of them even now are only to be gleaned from such scattered and remote villages, as have not yet been reached by the ravages of the schoolmaster.

What has been just now said of our provincial

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has now arrived, as when we read in the newspapers of a 'magnificent *luncheon*,' is quite modern; the word belonged a century ago to rustic life, and in literature had not travelled beyond the 'hobnailed pastorals' which professed to describe that life.

* Holland (*Pliny*, vol. ii. p. 428, and often) writes it so.

† An article *On English Pronouns Personal* in the *Transactions of the Philological Society*, vol. i. p. 277, will attest the excellent service which an accurate acquaintance with provincial usages may render in the investigation of perplexing phenomena in English grammar. Compare Guest, *Hist. of English Rhythms*, vol. ii. p. 207.

English, namely, that it is often *old* English rather than *bad* English, is not less true of many so-called Americanisms.* There are parts of America where 'het' is the participle of 'to heat;' thus it so stood at Dan. iii. 19 in the earlier editions of our Bible. 'Holp' still survives as the perfect of 'to help;' 'pled' (as in Spenser) of 'to plead;' and in a well-written American book I lately met 'dove' as the perfect of 'to dive;' indeed Longfellow uses it as well.

The dialects then are worthy of respect—and if in their grammar, so in their vocabulary no less. If the sage or the scholar were required to invent a word which should express the slight meal claimed in some of our southern counties by the labourer before he begins his mowing in the early morning, they might be sorely perplexed to do it. The Dorsetshire labourer who demands his 'dew-bit' has solved the difficulty. And this is what we find continually, namely, that the true art of word-making, which is hidden from philosophers, is revealed to the husbandman, the mechanic, the child. Spoken as a dialect is by those who are the actual cultivators of the soil, it will often be inconceivably rich in words having to do with the processes of husbandry; thus ripe corn blown about, or beaten down by rain or hail, may in East Anglia be said either to be 'baffled,' 'nickled,' 'snaffled,' 'shuckled,' or 'walted,'† each of these

* See Bartlett, *Dictionary of Americanisms*, passim.

† See Nall, *Dialect of East Anglia*, s. vv.

words having its own shade of meaning. Spoken by those who are in constant and close contact with external nature, it will often possess a far richer and more varied nomenclature to set forth the various features of this than the literary language itself. Max Müller has said in a passage of singular eloquence on the subject of what he calls dialectical regeneration,* 'We can hardly form an idea of the unbounded resources of dialects. When literary languages have stereotyped one general term, these dialects will supply fifty, each with its own special shade of meaning. If new combinations of thought are evolved in the progress of society, dialects will readily supply the required names from the store of their so-called superfluous words.' He has just before called them 'the feeders of language.'† A brook, a streamlet, a rivulet are very well, but what discriminating powers do they possess as compared with a 'beck,' a 'burn,' a 'gill,' a 'force,' North-country words, with each its special signification.

Words from the local dialects do continually slip into the land's language. Wordsworth has given allowance to 'force,' which I have just cited as the North-country name for a waterfall; and, if my memory do not err, to more than one other in my last list.‡ 'Clever' is an excellent example

* *On the Science of Language*, 1st part, p. 60.

† Compare Heyse, *System der Sprachwissenschaft*, p. 229.

‡ What use Luther made of the popular language in his translation of the Bible he has himself told us, and here is one secret of its epoch-marking character. These are his words:

of a low-born word which almost without observation has passed into general recognition. Sir Thomas Browne noted it as an East Anglian provincialism, and Ray as dialectic. Johnson protests against it as 'a low word, scarcely ever used but in burlesque or conversation.' Though the facts of the case do not bear out his statement to the full, there can be no doubt that it is a *parvenu*, which has through the last two centuries been struggling up to the position which it has now obtained.

So much has been done in this matter, the language has been so largely reinforced by words which either it has received back after a longer or shorter absence, or which in later days it has enlisted for the first time, as to afford a great encouragement for attempting more. But these suggestions must for the present suffice. I reserve for my lecture which follows the other half of the subject as I laid it out at the opening of this.

'Mann muss nicht, die Buchstaben in der lateinischen Sprache fragen, wie man soll deutsche reden; sondern man muss die Mutter im Hause, die Kinder auf den Gassen, den gemeinen Mann auf dem Markte darum fragen, und denselben auf das Maul sehen, wie sie reden.' Goethe too has given universal currency to words not a few, which were only provincial before him.

LECTURE VI.

DIMINUTIONS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

(CONTINUED).

THAT which in my preceding lecture has been said must suffice in respect of the words, and the character of the words, which we have lost or let go. Of these, indeed, if a language, as it travels onwards, loses some, it also acquires others, and probably many more than it loses; they are leaves on the tree of language, of which if some fall away, a new succession takes their place. But it is not so, as I already observed, with the *forms* or *powers* of a language, that is, with the various inflections, moods, duplicate or triplicate formation of tenses; which the speakers of a language come gradually to perceive that they can do without, and therefore cease to employ; seeking to suppress grammatical intricacies, and to obtain grammatical simplicity and so far as possible a pervading uniformity, sometimes even at the cost of letting go what had real worth, and contributed to the more lively, if not to the clearer, setting forth of the inner thought or feeling of the mind.* Here there is only loss, with no com-

* It has been well said, 'There is nothing more certain than this, that the earlier we can trace back any one language, the

pensating gain; or, at all events, diminution only, and never addition. In this region no creative energy is at work during the later periods of a language, during any, indeed, but quite the earliest, such as are withdrawn from our vision altogether. These are not as the leaves, but may be likened to the stem and leading branches of a tree, whose shape, mould, and direction are determined at a very early stage of its growth; and which age, or accident, or violence may make fewer, but which cannot become more numerous than they are. I have already slightly referred to a notable example of this, namely, to the dropping of the dual in Greek. And not there only it has been felt that this was not worth preserving, or at any rate that no serious inconvenience would

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more full, complete, and consistent are its forms; that the later we find it existing, the more compressed, colloquial and business-like it has become. Like the trees of our forests, it grows at first wild, luxuriant, rich in foliage, full of light and shadow, and flings abroad in its vast branches, the fruits of a youthful and vigorous nature; transplanted to the garden of civilisation and trained for the purposes of commerce, it becomes regulated, trimmed, pruned—nature indeed still gives it life, but art prescribes the direction and extent of its vegetation. Always we perceive a compression, a gradual loss of fine distinctions, a perishing of forms, terminations, and conjugations in the younger state of the language. The truth is, that in a language up to a certain period, there is a real indwelling vitality, a principle acting unconsciously, but pervasively in every part: men wield their forms of speech as they do their limbs—spontaneously, knowing nothing of their construction or the means by which these instruments possess their power. It may be even said that the commencement of the age of self-consciousness is identical with the close of that of vitality in language.'

follow on its loss. There is no such number in the modern German, Danish, or Swedish; in the old German and Norse there was. In other words, the stronger logic of a later day has 'found no reason for splitting the idea of moreness into twoness and muchness,' as Mommsen has quaintly put it.

How many niceties, delicacies, subtleties of language, *we*, speakers of the English tongue, in the course of centuries have got rid of; how bare (whether too bare is another question) we have stripped ourselves; what simplicity, for better or for worse, reigns in the present English, as compared with the old Anglo-Saxon. That had six declensions, our present English but one; that had three genders, English, if we except one or two words, has none; that formed the genitive in a variety of ways, we only in one; and the same fact meets us, wherever we compare the grammars of the two languages. Let me here repeat, that in an estimate of the gain or loss, we must not put certainly to loss everything which a language has dismissed, any more than everything to gain which it has acquired. Unnecessary and superfluous forms are no real wealth. They are often an embarrassment and an encumbrance rather than a help. The Finnish language has fourteen cases. Without pretending to know exactly what it can effect by them, I feel confident that it cannot effect more with its fourteen than the Greek is able to do with five. The half here may indeed be more than the whole. It therefore seems to me that some words of Otfried Müller, in many

ways admirable, exaggerate the losses consequent on the reduction of the forms of a language. 'It may be observed,' he says, 'that in the lapse of ages, from the time that the progress of language can be observed, grammatical forms, such as the signs of cases, moods and tenses have never been increased in number, but have been constantly diminishing. The history of the Romance, as well as of the Germanic, languages shows in the clearest manner how a grammar, once powerful and copious, has been gradually weakened and impoverished, until at last it preserves only a few fragments of its ancient inflections. Now there is no doubt that this luxuriance of grammatical forms is not an essential part of a language, considered merely as a vehicle of thought. It is well known that the Chinese language, which is merely a collection of radical words destitute of grammatical forms, can express even philosophical ideas with tolerable precision; and the English, which, from the mode of its formation by a mixture of different tongues, has been stripped of its grammatical inflections more completely than any other European language, seems, nevertheless, even to a foreigner, to be distinguished by its energetic eloquence. All this must be admitted by every unprejudiced inquirer; but yet it cannot be overlooked, that this copiousness of grammatical forms, and the fine shades of meaning which they express, evince a nicety of observation, and a faculty of distinguishing, which unquestionably prove that the race of mankind among whom these

languages arose was characterized by a remarkable correctness and subtlety of thought. Nor can any modern European, who forms in his mind a lively image of the classical languages in their ancient grammatical luxuriance, and compares them with his mother tongue, conceal from himself that in the ancient languages the words, with their inflections, clothed as it were with muscles and sinews, come forward like living bodies, full of expression and character, while in the modern tongues the words seem shrunk up into mere skeletons.'*

Whether languages are as much impoverished by this process as is here assumed, may, I think, be a question. I will endeavour to give you some materials which shall assist you in forming your own judgment in the matter.† And here I shall

* *Literature of Greece*, p. 5.

† I will also append the judgment of another scholar (Renan, *Les Langues Sémitiques*, p. 412): 'Bien loin de se représenter l'état actuel comme le développement d'un germe primitif moins complet et plus simple que l'état qui a suivi, les plus profonds linguistes sont unanimes pour placer à l'enfance de l'esprit humain des langues synthétiques, obscures, compliquées, si compliquées même que c'est le besoin d'un langage plus facile qui a portée les générations postérieures à abandonner la langue savante des ancêtres. Il serait possible, en prenant l'une après l'autre les langues de presque tous les pays où l'humanité a une histoire, d'y vérifier cette marche constante de la synthèse à l'analyse. Partout une langue ancienne a fait place à une langue vulgaire, qui ne constitue pas, à vrai dire, un idiome nouveau, mais plutôt une transformation de celle qui l'a précédée: celle-ci, plus savante, chargée de flexions pour exprimer les rapports infiniment délicats de la pensée, plus riche même dans son ordre d'idées, bien que cet ordre fût comparativement

do best, bringing before you not forms which the language has relinquished long ago, but mainly such as it is relinquishing now; these, touching us so nearly, will have more than an archaic interest for us. Thus the words which retain the French female termination in 'ess,' as 'heir,' which makes 'heiress,' and 'prophet' 'prophetess,' are every day becoming fewer. This has already fallen away in so many, and is evidently becoming of unfrequent use in so many more, that, if we may augur of the future from the analogy of the past, it will one day wholly vanish from our tongue. Thus all these occur in Wiclif's Bible; 'techeress' (2 Chron. xxxv. 25); 'friendess' (Prov. vii. 4); 'servantess' (Gen. xvi. 2); 'leperess' (=saltatrix, Ecclus. ix. 4); 'daunceress' (Ecclus. ix. 4); 'neighbouress' (Exod. iii. 22); 'sinneress' (Luke vii. 37); 'purpuress' (Acts xvi. 14); 'cousiness' (Luke i. 36); 'slayeress' (Tob. iii. 9); 'devouress' (Ezek. xxxvi. 13); 'spousess' (Prov. v. 19); 'thralless' (Jer. xxxiv. 16); 'dwelleress' (Jer. xxi. 13); 'waileress' (Jer. xix. 17); 'cheseress' (=electrix, Wisd. viii. 4); 'singeress' (2 Chron. xxxv. 25); 'breakeress,' 'waiteress,' this last indeed having recently come up again. Add to these 'chideress,' the female chider, 'herdess,' 'constabless,' 'mover-

moins étendu, image en un mot de la spontanéité primitive, où l'esprit accumulait les éléments dans une confuse unité, et perdait dans le tout la vue analytique des parties; le dialecte moderne, au contraire, correspondant à un progrès d'analyse, plus clair, plus explicite, séparant ce que les anciens assemblaient, brisant les mécanismes de l'ancienne langue pour donner à chaque idée et à chaque relation son expression isolée.'

ess,' 'jangleress,' 'soudaness' (=sultana), 'guideress,' 'charmeress' (all in Chaucer). Others reached to far later periods of the language; thus 'vanqueress' (Fabyan), 'Ethiopess' (Raleigh), 'exactress' (Isai. xiv. 4, Authorized Version, marg.), 'inhabitress' (Jer. x. 17); 'poisoneress' (Greneway); 'knightess' (Udal); 'pedleress,' 'championess,' 'vassaless,' 'avengeress,' 'warriouress,' 'victoress,' 'creatress,' 'tyranness,' 'Titaness,' 'Britoness' (all in Spenser); 'offendress,' 'fornicatress,' 'cloistress' 'jointress' (all in Shakespeare); 'vowess' (Holinshed); 'ministress,' 'flatteress' (both in Holland); 'captainess' (Sidney); 'saintess' (Sir T. Urquhart); 'leadress' (F. Thynne); 'heroess,' 'dragoness,' 'butleress,' 'contendress,' 'waggoness,' 'rectress' (all in Chapman); 'shootress' (Fairfax); 'archeress' (Fanshawe); 'clientess,' 'pandress' (both in Middleton); 'papess,' 'Jesuitess' (Bishop Hall); 'incitress' (Gayton); 'mediatress' (H. More); 'fautress' (Browne); 'soldieress,' 'guardianess,' 'votaress' (all in Beaumont and Fletcher); 'comfortress,' 'fosteress' (Ben Jonson); 'factress' (Ford); 'soveraintess' (Sylvester); 'preserveress' (Daniel); 'solicitress,' 'impostress,' 'buildress,' 'intrudress' (all in Fuller); 'favouress' (Hakewell); 'commandress' (Burton); 'monarchess,' 'discipless' (Speed); 'auditress,' 'cateress,' 'chantress,' 'desertress' or 'desertrice,' 'prelatess' (all in Milton); 'saviouress' (J. Taylor): 'citess, 'divineress' (both in Dryden); 'deaness' (Sterne); 'detractress' (Addison): 'hucksteress' (Howell); 'tutoress' (Shaftesbury); 'farmeress' (Lord Pe-

terborough, *Letter to Pope*); 'pilgrimess,' 'laddess, still surviving in the contracted form of 'lass;' with others which, I doubt not, a completer catalogue would contain.*

The same has happened with another feminine suffix, with the Saxon 'ster,' which takes the place of 'er,' where a feminine doer is intended.† 'Spinner' and 'spinster' are the only pair of such words which still survive. There were formerly many such; thus 'baker' had 'bakester,' being the female who baked; 'brewer' 'brewster;' 'sewer' 'sewster;' 'reader' 'readster;' 'seamer' 'seamster;' 'weaver' 'webster' (Golding, *Ovid*, p. 77); 'fruiterer' 'fruitester;' 'tumbler' 'tumblester;' 'hopper' 'hoppester' (these last three in Chaucer; 'the shippes *hoppesteres*,' about which so much has been said, being probably the ships *dancing*, *i.e.*, on the waves), 'host' 'hotestre' (*Ayenbite*); 'knitter' 'knitster' (a word still alive in Devon). Add to these 'whitster' (a female bleacher, Shakespeare), 'kempster' (pectrix), 'dryster' (siccatrix), 'brawdster' (=embroideress), and 'salster' (salinaria).‡ It is a singular evidence of the richness of a language in forms at the earlier stages of its existence, that not a few of the words which had,

* In Cotgrave's *Dictionary* I note 'praiseress,' 'commendress,' 'fluteress,' 'possesseress,' 'loveress,' 'regentess,' but have never met them in use.

† On this termination see J. Grimm, *Deutsche Gramm.*, vol. ii. p. 134; vol. iii. p. 339; Donaldson, *New Cratylus*, 3rd edit. p. 419.

‡ I am indebted for these last four to a *Nominale* in the *National Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 216.

as we have just seen, a feminine termination in 'ess,' had also a second in 'ster.' Thus 'daunser,' besides 'daunseress,' had also 'daunster' (Ecclus. ix. 4); 'wailer,' beside 'waileress,' had 'wailster' (Jer. ix. 17); 'dweller' 'dwelster' (Jer. xxi. 13); and 'singer' 'singster' (2 Kin. xix. 35); so too, 'chider' had 'chidester' (Chaucer), as well as 'chideress,' 'slayer' 'slayster' (Tob. iii. 9), as well as 'slayeress,' 'chooser' 'chesister' (Wisd. viii. 4), as well as 'cheseress,' with others that might be named.

It is impossible then to subscribe to Marsh's statement, great as his authority on a matter of English scholarship must be, when he affirms, 'I find no positive evidence to show that the termination "ster" was ever regarded as a feminine termination in English.' It has indeed been urged that the existence of such words as 'seamstr*ess*,' 'songstr*ess*,' is decisive proof that the ending 'ster' of itself was not counted sufficient to designate persons as female; since if 'seam*ster*' and 'song*ster*' had been felt to be already feminine, no one would have thought of doubling on this, and adding a second female termination; 'seam*stress*,' 'song*stress*.' But all which this proves is, that when the final 'ess' was superadded to these already feminine forms, and all examples of it belong to a comparatively late period of the language, the true law of the words had been lost sight of and forgotten.* The same may be

* Richardson's earliest example of 'seamstress' is from Gay,

affirmed of such other of these feminine forms as are now applied to men, such as 'gamester,'* 'youngster,' 'oldster,' 'drugster' (South), 'huckster,' 'hackster' (=swordsman, Milton, prose), 'teamster,' 'throwster,' 'rhymester,' 'punster' (*Spectator*), 'tapster,' 'whipster' 'lewdster' (Shakespeare), 'trickster.' Either like 'teamster,' and 'punster,' the words did not come into being till the true significance of this form was altogether forgotten;† or like 'tapster,' which was still female in Skelton's time ('a *tapster* like a lady bright'), as it is now in Dutch and Frisian, and distinguished from 'tapper,' the *man* who has charge of the tap, or as 'bakester,' at this day used in Scotland for 'baker,' as 'dyester' for 'dyer,' the word did originally belong of right

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of 'songstress,' from Thomson. I find however 'sempstress' in Olearius' *Voyages and Travels*, 1669, p. 43. As late as Ben Jonson, 'seamster' and 'songster' expressed the *female* seamer and singer; in his *Masque of Christmas* one of the children of Christmas is 'Wassel, like a neat *sempster* and *songster; her* page bearing a brown bowl.' Compare a passage from *Holland's Leaguer*, 1632: 'A *tyre-woman* of phantastical ornaments, a *sempster* for ruffes, cuffes, smocks and waistcoats.'

* 'Gamester' may very probably be game-master, and therefore have no more right to be considered as one of this family of words than 'monster' from monstrum.

† This was about the time of Henry VIII. In proof of the confusion which reigned on the subject in Shakespeare's time, see his use of 'spinster' as='spinner,' the *man* spinning, *Henry VIII.*, Act i. Sc. 2; and doubtless too in *Othello*, Act i. Sc. 1. And a little later, in Howell's *Vocabulary*, 1659, 'spinner' and 'spinster' are *both* referred to the male sex, and the barbarous 'spinstress' invented for the female.

and exclusively to women; but with the gradual transfer of the occupation to men, and an increasing forgetfulness of what this termination implied, there went also a transfer of the name,* just as in other words, and out of the same causes, the converse finds place; and 'baker' or 'brewer,' not 'bakester' or 'brewster,' would be now applied to the woman baking or brewing. So en-

* In the *Nominale* referred to, p. 213, the words, 'hæc auxiatrix, a *hukster*,' occur. That the huckster is properly the *female* pedlar is sufficiently plain. 'To hawk' was formerly 'to huck'—it is so used by Bishop Andrews, and the 'hucker' or hawker (the German 'höker' or 'höcker'), is the *man* who 'hucks,' 'hawks,' or peddles, the 'huckster' the *woman* who does the same. Howell then and others employing 'hucksteress,' fall into the same barbarous excess of expression, whereof we are all guilty in 'seamstress' and 'songstress.' Let me take the opportunity of noting another curious excess of expression that has succeeded in establishing itself in the language. If we turn to books of two or three hundred years ago, we find 'adulter' (Tyndale), 'poulter' (Shakespeare), 'cater' (Drayton), 'royster' (Gascoigne), 'upholster' (Strype), 'embroider' (Holland); and these all sufficiently justify themselves; 'adulter,' a transfer of a Latin word into English, 'poulter' one dealing in poults, 'cater,' in cates, and so on; but the sense of this final 'er,' the remnant of the Anglo-Saxon 'wer,' a man, and of what it indicates, namely the habitual doer of a thing, is so strong, that men have not been content without adding it a second time to all these words; and they are severally now 'adulterer,' 'poulterer,' 'caterer,' 'roysterer,' 'upholsterer,' 'embroiderer;' and that this superaddition has its root in the linguistic instinct of our people is evident from the fact that the same has been attempted in other words, though without the same success; thus 'fisherer' (it occurs in Cotgrave) is in provincial usage for 'fisher' (see Forby and other local glossaries), and the same has extended to words of a different formation, 'musicianer,' 'physicianer,' 'masoner' (all in Forby), and to others.

tirely has this power of the language died out, that it survives more apparently than really even in 'spinner' and 'spinster;' seeing that 'spinster' has now quite another meaning than that of a woman spinning; whom, as well as the man, we should call, not a 'spinster,' but a 'spinner.'* It would be hard to believe, but for the constant experience we have of the fact, how soon and how easily the true law and significance of some form, which has never ceased to be in everybody's mouth, may yet be lost sight of by all. No more curious chapter in the history of language could be written than one which should trace the transgressions of its most primary laws, the violations of analogy and the like, which follow hereupon; the plurals like 'welkin' (='wolken,' the clouds), 'chicken,'† which are dealt with as singulars, the singulars, like 'riches' (richesse)‡, 'pease' (pisum,

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* *Notes and Queries*, No. 157.

† When Wallis wrote, it was only beginning to be forgotten that 'chick' was the singular, and 'chicken' the plural: '*Sunt qui dicunt* in singulari "chicken," et in plurali "chickens;"' and even now the words are in many country parts correctly employed. In Sussex, a correspondent writes, they would as soon think of saying 'oxens' as 'chickens.'

‡ See Chaucer, *Romaunt of the Rose*, 1032, where Richesse, 'an high lady of great noblesse,' is one of the persons of the allegory. This has so entirely escaped Ben Jonson, English scholar as he was, that in his *Grammar* he cites 'riches' as an example of an English word wanting a singular; and at a later day Wemyss (*Biblical Gleanings*, p. 212) complains of a false concord at Rev. xviii. 17: 'For in one hour so great riches *is* come to nought.'

pois),* 'alms,' 'eaves,' 'summons' (summoneas), 'Cyclops,' which are assumed to be plurals.

One example of this is familiar to us all; probably so familiar that it would not be worth adverting to it, if it did not so excellently well illustrate this forgetfulness which may overtake a whole people, of the true meaning of a grammatical form which they have never ceased to employ. I refer to the mistaken assumption that the 's' of the genitive, as 'the king's countenance,' was merely a more rapid way of pronouncing 'the king *his* countenance,' and that the final 's' in 'king's' was in fact an elided 'his.' This explanation for a long time prevailed almost universally; I believe there are many who accept it still. It was in vain that here and there a deeper knower of our tongue protested against this 'monstrous syntax,' as Ben Jonson justly calls it.† It was in vain that Wallis, another English scholar of the seventeenth century, pointed out that the slightest examination of the facts revealed the untenable character of this explanation, seeing that we do not merely say 'the *king's* countenance,' but 'the *queen's* countenance;' and in this case the final 's' cannot stand for 'his,' for 'the queen *his* countenance' cannot be intended;‡ we do not say merely 'the *child's* bread,'

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* 'Set shallow brooks to surging seas,
An orient pearl to a white *pease*.'—*Puttenham.*

† It is curious that despite of this protest, one of his plays has for its name, *Sejanus his Fall.*

‡ Even this does not startle Addison, or cause him any mis-

but 'the *children's* bread,' where it is no less impossible to resolve the phrase into 'the children *his* bread.' * Notwithstanding these protests the error held its ground. This much indeed of a plea it could make for itself, that such an actual employment of 'his' *had* found its way into the language, as early as the fourteenth century, and had been in occasional, though rare use, from that time downward.† Yet this, which has only been elicited by the researches of recent scholars, does not in the least justify those who assumed that in the habitual 's' of the genitive were to be found the remains of 'his'—an error from which the books of scholars in the seventeenth, and in the early decades of the eighteenth, century are not a whit

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giving; on the contrary he boldly asserts (*Spectator*, No. 135), 'The same single letter "s" on many occasions does the office of a whole word, and represents the "his" *or* "*her*" of our forefathers.'

* Wallis excellently well disposes of this scheme, although less successful in showing what this 's' does mean than in showing what it cannot mean (*Gramm. Ling. Anglic.*, c. 5): Qui autem arbitrantur illud s, loco *his* adjunctum esse (priori scilicet parte per aphæresim abscissâ), ideoque apostrophi notam semper vel pingendam esse, vel saltem subintelligendam, omnino errant. Quamvis enim non negem quin apostrophi nota commode nonnunquam affigi possit, ut ipsius litteræ s usus distinctius, ubi opus est, percipiatur; ita tamen semper fieri debere, aut etiam ideo fieri quia vocem *his* innuat, omnino nego. Adjungitur enim et fœminarum nominibus propriis, et substantivis pluralibus, ubi vox *his* sine solœcismo locum habere non potest: atque etiam in possessivis *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*, *hers*, ubi vocem *his* innui nemo somniaret.

† See the proofs in Marsh, *Manual of the English Language*, English Edit., pp. 280, 293.

clearer than those of others. Spenser, Donne, Fuller, Jeremy Taylor, all fall into it; Dryden more than once helps out his verse with an additional syllable gained by its aid. It has forced itself into our Prayer Book itself, where in the 'Prayer for all sorts and conditions of men,' added by Bishop Sanderson at the last revision of the Liturgy in 1661, we are bidden to say, 'and this we beg for Jesus Christ *his* sake.'* I need hardly tell you that this 's' is in fact the one remnant of flexion surviving in the singular number of our English noun substantives; it is in all the Indo-Germanic languages the original sign of the genitive, or at any rate the earliest of which we can take cognizance; and just as in Latin 'lapis' makes 'lapidis' in the genitive, so 'king,' 'queen,' 'child,' make severally 'kings,' 'queens,' 'childs,' the comma, an apparent note of elision, being a mere modern expedient, 'a late refinement,' as Ash calls it,† to distinguish the genitive singular from the plural cases.‡

Notice another example of this willingness to

* It would not exceed the authority of our University Presses, if this were removed from the Prayer Book. Such a liberty they have already assumed with the Bible. In all earlier editions of the Authorized Version it stood at 1 Kin. xv. 14: 'Nevertheless *Asa his* heart was perfect with the Lord;' it is '*Asa's* heart' now. In the same way '*Mordecai his* matters' (Esth. iii. 4) has been silently changed into '*Mordecai's* matters;' and in some modern editions, but not in all, '*Holofernes his* head' (Judith xiii. 9) into '*Holofernes'* head.'

† In a good note on the matter, p. 6, in the *Comprehensive Grammar* prefixed to his *Dictionary*, London, 1775.

‡ See Grimm, *Deutsche Gramm.*, vol. ii. pp. 609, 944.

dispense with inflection, of this endeavour to reduce the forms of a language to the fewest possible, consistent with the accurate communication of thought. Of our adjectives in 'en,' formed on substantives, and expressing the material or substance of a thing, a vast number have gone, many others are going, out of use; while we content ourselves with the bare juxtaposition of the substantive itself, as sufficiently expressing our meaning. Thus instead of '*golden* pin' we say '*gold* pin;' instead of '*earthen* works' we say '*earth*works.' 'Golden' and 'earthen,' it is true, still belong to our living speech, though mainly as part of our poetic diction, or of the solemn and thus stereotyped language of Scripture; but a whole company of such words have nearly or quite disappeared; some lately, some long ago. 'Steelen,' 'flowren,' 'thornen,' 'clouden,' 'rocken,' 'firen,' belong only to the earliest period of the language. 'Rosen' also went early; Chaucer is my latest authority for it ('*rosen* chapelet'). 'Hairen' is in Wiclif and in Chaucer; 'stonen' in the former (John iii. 6).* 'Silvern' stood originally in Wiclir's Bible ('*silverne* housis to Diane,' Acts xix. 24); but already in the second recension this was exchanged for 'silver;' 'hornen,'

* The existence of 'stony' (='lapidosus,' 'steinig') does not make 'stonen' (='lapideus,' 'steinern') superfluous any more than 'earthy' makes 'earthen' and 'earthly.' That part of the field in which the good seed withered so quickly (Matt. xiii. 5) was 'stony;' the vessels which held the water turned into wine (John iii. 6) were 'stonen.'

still in our dialects, he also employs, with 'clayen' (Job iv. 19), and 'iverene' (Cant. vi. 4) or made of ivory. 'Tinnen' occurs in Sylvester's *Du Bartas*; where also we meet with 'Jove's *milken* alley,' just as in Bacon also it is not 'the *Milky*,' but 'the *Milken* Way.' In the coarse polemics of the Reformation the phrase, '*breaden* god,' provoked by the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation, was of frequent employment, and occurs as late as in Oldham. '*Mothen* parchments' is in Fulke; '*twiggen* bottle' and '*threaden* sail' in Shakespeare; '*yewen*' or '*ewghen* bow,' in Spenser; '*cedarn* alley' and '*azurn* sheen' in Milton; '*boxen* leaves' in Dryden; 'a *treen* cup' in Jeremy Taylor; '*eldern* popguns' in Sir Thomas Overbury; 'a *glassen* breast,' in Whitlock; 'a *reeden* hat' in Coryat; 'a *wispen* garland' in Gabriel Harvey; 'yarnen' occurs in Tuberville; 'fursen' in Holland; while 'bricken,' 'papern,' 'elmen,' appear from our provincial glossaries to be still in use.

It is true that some of these adjectives still hold their ground; but we may note how the roots which sustain even these are being gradually cut away from beneath them. Thus 'brazen' might at first sight seem as strongly established in the language as ever; but is far from so being. Even now it only lives in a tropical and secondary sense, as 'a *brazen* face;' or if in a literal, in poetic diction or in the consecrated language of Scripture, as 'the *brazen* serpent;' otherwise we say 'a *brass* farthing,' 'a *brass* candlestick.' It is

the same with 'oaten,' 'oaken,' 'birchen,' 'beechen,' 'strawen,' and many more, whereof some are obsolescent, some obsolete, the language manifestly tending now, as it has tended for centuries past, to the getting quit of these, and to the satisfying of itself with an adjectival apposition of the substantive instead.

There are other examples of the manner in which a language, as it travels onward, simplifies itself, approaches more and more to a grammatical and logical uniformity, seeks to do the same thing always in the same manner; where it has two or more ways of conducting a single operation, dismisses all save one; and thus becomes, no doubt, easier to be mastered, more handy, and manageable; for its very riches were to many an embarrassment and a perplexity; but at the same time limits and restrains its own freedom of action, and is in danger of forfeiting elements of strength, variety and beauty, which it once possessed. Take for instance the tendency of our verbs to let go their strong preterites, and to substitute weak ones in their room; or, where they have two or three preterites, to retain only one of them, and that almost invariably the weak one. Many of us no doubt are familiar with the terms, 'strong' and 'weak' preterites, which in all our better grammars have put out of use the misleading terms, 'irregular' and 'regular;' still I may as well remind you of the exact meaning of the terms. A strong preterite is one formed by an internal vowel change; for instance the verb 'to *drive*' forms

the preterite '*drove*' by an internal change of the vowel 'i' into 'o.' But why, it may be asked, called 'strong'? In acknowledgment of the vigour and indwelling energy of the word, enabling it to form a past tense from its own resources, and with no calling in of help from without. On the other hand 'lift' forms its preterite 'lift*ed*,' not by any internal change, but by the addition of 'ed;' 'grieve' in like manner has 'grief*ed*.' Here are weak tenses; as strength was ascribed to those other, so weakness to these, which can only form their preterites by external aid and addition. You will perceive at once that those strong preterites, while they attest a vital energy in the words which are able to put them forth, do also, as all must allow, contribute much to the variety and charm of a language.*

Yet for all this they are becoming fewer every day; multitudes have already disappeared, others are in the act of disappearing. Nor is the balance redressed and compensation found in any new creations of the kind. The power of forming strong preterites is long ago extinct; probably no verb which has come into the language since the Con-

* J. Grimm (*Deutsche Gramm.* vol. i. p. 1040): Dass die starke Form die ältere, kräftigere, innere; die schwache die spätere, gehemmtere und mehr äusserliche sey, leuchtet ein. Elsewhere, speaking generally of inflections by internal vowel change, he characterizes them as a 'chief beauty' (hauptschönheit) of the Teutonic languages. Marsh (*Manual of the English Language*, p. 233, English ed.) protests, though, as it seems to me, on no sufficient grounds, against these terms 'strong' and 'weak,' as themselves fanciful and inappropriate.

quest has asserted this power, while a whole legion have let it go. For example, 'shape' has now a weak preterite, 'shaped,' it had once a strong one, 'shope;' 'bake' has now a weak preterite, 'baked,' it had once a strong one, 'boke;' the preterite of 'glide' is now 'glided,' it was once 'glode' or 'glid;' 'help' makes now 'helped,' it made once 'halp' and 'holp.' 'Creep' made 'crope,' still current in the north of England, and 'crep' (*Story of Genesis*); 'weep' 'wope' and 'wep;' 'yell' 'yoll;' 'quake' 'quoke' (all in Chaucer); 'seethe' 'soth' or 'sod' (Gen. xxv. 29); 'sheer' once made 'shore;' as 'leap' made 'lope' (Spenser): 'wash' 'wishe' (Chaucer); 'snow' 'snew;' 'thaw' 'thew;' 'gnaw' 'gnew;' 'sow' 'sew;' 'delve' 'dalf' and 'dolve;' 'sweat' 'swat;' 'yield' 'yold' (both in Spenser); 'mete' 'mat;' 'stretch' 'straught' (both in Wiclif); 'reach' 'raught;' 'melt' 'molt;' 'wax' 'wex' and 'wox;' 'squeeze' 'squoze;' 'dive' 'dove;' 'laugh' 'leugh;' with others more than can be enumerated here.* A

* The entire ignorance as to the past historic evolution of the language, with which some have undertaken to write about it, is curious. Thus the author of *Observations upon the English Language*, without date, but published about 1730, treats all these strong preterites as of recent introduction, counting 'knew' to have lately expelled 'knowed,' 'rose' to have acted the same part toward 'rised,' and of course esteeming them so many barbarous violations of the laws of the language; and concluding with the warning that 'great care must be taken to prevent their increase.' !!—p. 24. Cobbett does not fall into this absurdity, yet proposes in his *English Grammar*, that they should all be abolished as inconvenient. There are two letters in *The*

very large number of these still survive in our provincial dialects.

Observe further that where verbs have not actually renounced their strong preterites, and contented themselves with weak in their room, yet, once possessing two, perhaps three of these strong, they now retain only one. The others, on the principle ever at work in language, of dismissing whatever can be dismissed, they have let go. Thus 'chide' had once 'chid' and 'chode,' but though 'chode' is in our Bible (Gen. xxxi. 36), it has not maintained itself in our speech; 'sling' had 'slung' and 'slang' (1 Sam. xvii. 49); only 'slung' remains; 'fling' had once 'flung' and 'flang;' 'strive' had 'strove' and 'strave' (Holland); 'stick' had 'stuck' and 'stack;' 'hang' had 'hung' and 'hing' (Golding); 'tread' had 'trod' and 'trad;' 'choose' had 'chose' and 'chase' (Elyot), 'give' had 'gave' and 'gove;' 'spin' 'spun' and 'span;' 'steal' 'stale' and 'stole;' 'strive' 'strove' and 'strave;' 'lead' had 'led' 'lad' and 'lode;' 'write' had 'wrote' 'writ' and 'wrate.' In these instances, and in many more, only the preterites which I have first named remain in use.

Observe too that wherever a struggle is now going forward between weak and strong forms,

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Spectator, Nos. 78 and 80, on the relations between 'who,' 'which,' and 'that,' singularly illustrative of the same absolute ignorance of the whole past of the language. The writers throughout assume 'that' to have recently displaced 'which,' as a relative pronoun.

which shall continue, the battle is not to the strong; on the contrary the weak is carrying the day: 'climbed' is gaining the upper hand of 'clomb,' 'swelled' of 'swoll,' 'hanged' of 'hung.' There are, it is true, a very few exceptions to this. Thus 'they have *digged* a pit' stands in our Bibles; we should now say 'dug.' The verb 'to stick' makes 'sticked' in Coverdale's Version; it has only 'stuck' for a preterite now. 'Growed' and not 'grew' is in *Piers Ploughman* the perfect of 'to grow.' But these are quite the exceptions; and it is not too much to anticipate that a time will come, although it may be still far off, when all English verbs will form their preterites weakly; not without serious damage to the fulness, variety, and force, which in this respect the language even now displays, and once far more eminently displayed.*

Take another proof of this tendency in our own language to drop forms and renounce its own inherent powers; though here also the renunciation, threatening one day to be complete, is only partial at the present. I refer to the formation of our comparatives and superlatives; and I will ask you to observe once more that ever recurring law of language, namely, that wherever two or more ways of attaining the same result exist, there is always a disposition to drop and dismiss all of these but one, so that the alternative or choice

* J. Grimm (*Deutsche Gramm.* vol. i. p. 839): Die starke Flexion stufenweise versinkt und ausstirbt, die schwache aber um sich greift. Cf. i. 994, 1040; ii. 5; iv. 509.

of ways once existing, shall not exist any more. If only a language can attain a greater simplicity, it seems to grudge no self-impoverishment by which this result may be brought about. We have two ways of forming our comparatives and superlatives, one inherent in the word itself, and inherited from our old Gothic stock, thus 'bright,' 'bright*er*,' 'bright*est*;' the other supplementary to this, by the employing of the auxiliaries 'more' and 'most.' The first, organic we might call it, the indwelling power of the word to mark its own degrees, must needs be esteemed the more excellent way; which yet, already disallowed in almost all adjectives of more than two syllables in length, is daily becoming of more restrained application. Compare in this matter our present condition with our past. Wiclif forms without scruple such comparatives as 'grievouser,' 'gloriouser,' 'patienter,' 'profitabler,' such superlatives as 'grievousest,' 'famousest.' We meet in Tyndale, 'excellenter,' 'miserablest;' in Roger Ascham, 'inventivest,' 'shiningest;' in Shakespeare, 'ancientest,' 'violentest;' in Gabriel Harvey, 'vendiblest,' 'substantialest,' 'insolentest;' in Rogers, 'insufficienter,' goldenest;' in Beaumont and Fletcher, 'valiantest;' in Bacon, 'excellentest;' in Sylvester, 'infamousest.' Milton uses 'exquisitest,' 'virtuosest,' and in prose 'vitiosest,' 'elegantest,' 'artificialest,' 'servilest,' 'sheepishest,' 'moralest,' 'resolutest,' 'sensualest;' Fuller has 'fertilest;' Baxter 'tediousest;' Butler 'dangerouser,' 'preciousest,' 'intolerablest,' 'preposterousest;' Burnet 'co-

piousest;' Gray 'impudentest.' Of these forms, and it would be easy to adduce almost any number, I suppose we should not now employ one. In participles and adverbs in 'ly,' these organic comparatives and superlatives hardly survive at all. We do not say 'willinger' or 'lovinger,' and still less 'flourishingest,' or 'shiningest,' or 'surmountingest,' all which Gabriel Harvey, a foremost master of the English of his time, employs; 'plenteouslyer,' 'fulliest' (Baxter), 'charitablier' (Barnes), 'amplier' (Milton), 'easiliest' (Fuller), 'plainliest' (Dryden), would be all inadmissible at present.

In the manifest disposition of English at the present moment to reduce the number of words in which this more vigorous scheme of expressing degrees is allowed, we must recognize an evidence that youthful energies in the language are abating, and the stiffness of approaching age making itself felt. Still it fares with us here only as it fares with all languages, in which at a certain stage of their existence auxiliary words, leaving the main word unaltered, are preferred to inflections of this last. Such preference makes itself ever more strongly felt; and, judging from analogy, I cannot doubt that a day, however distant now, will arrive, when the only way of forming comparatives and superlatives in the English language will be by prefixing 'more' and 'most;' or, if the other survive, it will be in poetry alone.

It will fare not otherwise, as I am bold to predict, with the flexional genitive, formed in 's' or 'es'

(see p. 218). This too will finally disappear, or will survive only in poetry, being there just as much an archaic form as the 'pictaï' of Virgil. A time will arrive, when it will no longer be free to say as now, either, '*the king's sons*,' or '*the sons of the king*,' but when the latter will be the only admissible form. Tokens of this are already evident. The region in which the alternative forms are equally good is daily narrowing. We should not now any more write, 'when *man's son* shall come' (Wiclif), but 'when *the Son of man* shall come;' nor yet, '*the hypocrite's hope* shall perish' (Job viii. 13), but '*the hope of the hypocrite* shall perish;' nor '*the Philistines' land*' (Gen. xxi. 34), but '*the land of the Philistines*;' not with Barrow, 'No man can be ignorant *of human life's brevity and uncertainty*,' but 'No man can be ignorant *of the brevity and uncertainty of human life*.' The consummation which I here anticipate may be centuries off, but it will assuredly arrive.*

Then too diminutives are fast disappearing. If we desire to express smallness, we prefer to do

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* Schleicher in his masterly treatise, *Die Deutsche Sprache*, 1860, p. 69, notes the same as going forward in German: Das Schwinden der Casus und ihren Ersatz durch Präpositionen können wir in unsrer jetzigen deutschen Sprache recht deutlich beobachten. Anstatt süssen Weines voll u. dgl. pflegen wir im gewöhnlichen Leben schon zu sagen, voll von süssem Weine; ja manche deutsche Volksmundarten haben den Genitiv fast spurlos verloren und sagen z. B. anstatt 'meines Bruders Sohn' entweder 'der Sohn von meinem Bruder,' oder 'meinem Bruder sein Sohn.'

it by an auxiliary word; thus a little pill, and not a 'pillock' (Levins), a little fist, and not a 'fistock (Golding), a little lad, and not a 'ladkin,' a little drop, and not a 'droplet' (Shakespeare), a little worm, and not a 'wormling' (Sylvester). It is true that of diminutives a good many still survive, in all our four terminations of such, as 'hillock,' 'streamlet,' 'lambkin,' 'gosling;' but they are few as compared with those which have perished, and are every day becoming fewer. Where now is 'kingling' (Holland), 'friarling' (Foxe), 'whimling' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'popeling' (Hacket), 'streamling,' 'godling,' 'loveling,' 'dwarfling,' 'shepherdling' (all in Sylvester), 'chasteling' (Becon), 'niceling' (Stubbs), 'poetling,' 'fosterling' (both in Ben Jonson), and 'masterling'? Where now 'porelet' (=paupercula, Isai. x. 30, Vulg.), 'bundelet,' (both in Wiclif); 'chastilet,' or little castle (*Piers Ploughman*), 'cushionet' (Henry More), 'riveret' (Drayton), 'havenet,' or little haven, 'pistolet,' 'bulkin' (Holland), and a hundred more? Even of those remaining many are putting off, or have long since put off, their diminutive sense; a 'pocket' being no longer a *small* poke, nor a 'latchet' a *small* lace, nor a 'trumpet' a *small* trump, as once they were.

Once more—in the entire dropping among the higher classes of 'thou,' except in poetry or in addresses to the Deity, and, consequent on this, in the dropping of the second singular of the verb with its strongly marked flexion, as 'lovest,' 'lovedst,' we have another example of a power

which has been allowed to expire. In the seventeenth century 'thou' in English, as at the present 'du' in German, 'tu' in French, was the sign of familiarity, whether that familiarity was of love, or of contempt.* It was not unfrequently the latter. Thus at Sir Walter Raleigh's trial (1603), Coke, when argument and evidence failed him, insulted, and meant to insult, the illustrious prisoner by applying to him the term 'thou':—'All that Lord Cobham did was at *thy* instigation, *thou* viper! for I *thou* thee, *thou* traitor.' And when Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night* is urging Sir Andrew Aguecheek to send a sufficiently provocative challenge to Viola, he suggests that he 'taunt him with the licence of ink; if thou *thou'st* him some thrice, it shall not be amiss.' To keep this in mind will throw much light on one peculiarity of the Quakers, and give a certain dignity to it, as once maintained, which at present it is very far from possessing. However needless and unwise their determination to 'thee' and 'thou' the whole world, this was not then, as it seems now to us, and, through the silent changes which language has undergone, as now it indeed is, a gratuitous departure from the ordinary usage of society. Right or wrong, it meant something, and had an ethical motive: being indeed a testimony upon their parts, however misplaced, that they would not have high or great or rich men's

* Thus Wallis (*Gramm. Ling. Anglic.*, 1654): Singulari numero siquis alium compellet, vel dedignantis illud esse solet, vel familiariter blandientis.

persons in admiration; nor render the observance to some which they withheld from others. It was a testimony too which cost them something. At present we can very little understand the amount of courage which this 'thou-ing' and 'thee-ing' of all the world demanded on their parts, nor yet the amount of indignation and offence which it stirred up in them who were not aware of, or would not allow for, the scruples which, as they thought, obliged them to it.* It is, however, in its other aspect that we must chiefly regret the dying out of the use of 'thou'—that is, as the pledge of peculiar intimacy and special affection, as between husband and wife, parents and children, and such other as might be knit together by bands of more than a common love.

I will finish this lecture with one further illustration drawn from the remoter periods of the language, and invite you to note a force not now waning and failing from it, but one extinct long ago. I refer to the renouncing of a distribution of its nouns into masculine, feminine, and neuter, as in German, or even into masculine and feminine,

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* What the actual position of the compellation 'thou' was at that time, we learn from Fuller (*Church History, Dedication of Book* vii.): 'In opposition whereunto [*i.e.* to the Quaker usage] we maintain that *thou* from superiors to inferiors is proper, as a sign of command; from equals to equals is passable, as a note of familiarity; but from inferiors to superiors, if proceeding from ignorance, hath a smack of clownishness; if from affectation, a tone of contempt.' There is a most interesting and exhaustive discussion on the past relation between 'thou' and 'you' in *Guesses at Truth*, 1866, pp. 120–133.

as in French; and with this, and as a necessary consequence of this, the dropping of any flexional modification in the adjectives connected with them. It is the boldest step in the way of simplification which the language has at any time taken; and, I need not say, was only taken by degrees. Natural *sex* of course remains, being inherent in all language; but grammatical *gender*, with the exception of 'he,' 'she,' and 'it,' and perhaps one or two other fragmentary instances, the language has altogether forgone. An example will make clear the distinction between these. Thus it is not the word 'poetess' which is *feminine*, but the person indicated who is *female*. So too 'daughter,' 'queen,' are in English not *feminine* nouns, but nouns designating *female* persons. Take on the contrary 'filia' or 'regina,' 'fille' or 'reine,' there you have *feminine* nouns as well as *female* persons. We did not inherit this simplicity from others, but, like the Danes, in so far as they have done the like, have made it for ourselves. Whether we turn to the Latin, or, which is for us more important, to the old Gothic, we find gender; and in all daughter languages which have descended from the Latin, in most of those which have descended from the ancient Gothic stock, it is fully established to this day. The practical business-like character of the English mind asserted itself in the rejection of a distinction, which in a vast proportion of words, that is, in all which are the signs of *inanimate* objects, and as such incapable of sex, rested upon a fiction, and had no ground

in the real nature of things. It is only by an act and effort of the imagination that sex, and thus gender, can be attributed to a table, a ship, or a tree; and there are aspects, this being one, in which the English is among the least imaginative of all languages, even while it has been employed in some of the mightiest works of imagination which the world has ever seen.*

What, it may be asked, is the meaning and explanation of all this? It is that at certain earlier periods of a nation's life its genius is synthetic, and at later becomes analytic. At earlier periods the imagination is more than the understanding; men love to contemplate the thing and the mode of the thing together, as a single idea, bound up in one. But a time arrives when the intellectual obtains the upper hand of the imaginative, when the inclination of those that speak a language is to analyse, to distinguish between these two, and not only to distinguish, but to divide, to have one word for the thing itself, and another for the quality or manner of the thing; and this, as it would appear, is true not of some languages only, but of all.

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* Compare Pott, *Etymologische Forschungen*, part 2, p. 404.

LECTURE VII.

CHANGES IN THE MEANING OF ENGLISH WORDS.

I TAKE for my subject in the present lecture those changes which have found or are now finding place, in the meaning of English words; so that, whether we are aware of it or not, we employ them at this day in senses very different from those in which our forefathers employed them of old. You will observe that it is not *obsolete* words, such as have quite fallen out of present use, which I propose to consider; but such, rather, as are still on the lips of men, although with meanings more or less removed from those which once they possessed. My subject is far more practical, has far more to do with your actual life, than if I had taken obsolete words, and considered them. These last have an interest indeed, but so long as they remain what they are, and are to be found only in our glossaries, it is an interest of an antiquarian character. They constituted a part of the intellectual money with which our ancestors carried on the business of their lives; but now they are rather medals for the cabinets and collections of the curious than current money for the service of all. Their wings are clipped;

they are '*winged* words' no more; the spark of thought or feeling, kindling from mind to mind, no longer runs along them, as along the electric wires of the soul.

And then, besides this, there is little danger that any should be misled by them. They are as rocks which, standing out from the sea, declare their presence, and are therefore easily avoided; while those other are as hidden rocks, which are the more dangerous, that their very existence is unsuspected. A reader lights for the first time on some word which has now passed out of use, as 'frampold,' or 'garboil,' or 'brangle;' he is at once conscious of his ignorance; he has recourse to a glossary, or if he guesses from the context at the signification, still his guess is a guess to him, and no more. But words that have changed their meaning have often a deceivableness about them; a reader not once doubts but that he knows their intention; he is visited with no misgiving that they possess for him another force than that which they possessed for the author in whose writings he finds them, and which they conveyed to *his* contemporaries. He little dreams how far the old life may have gone out of them, and a new life entered in.

Let us suppose a student to light on a passage like the following (it is from the *Preface* to Howell's *Lexicon*, 1660): 'Though the root of the English language be *Dutch*, yet it may be said to have been inoculated afterwards on a French stock.' He may know that the Dutch is a sister dialect to our own; but this that it is the

mother or root of it will certainly perplex him, and he will hardly know what to make of the assertion; perhaps he ascribes it to an error in his author, who is thereby unduly lowered in his esteem. But presently in the course of his reading he meets with the following statement, this time in Fuller's *Holy War*, being a history of the Crusades: 'The French, *Dutch*, Italian, and English were the four elemental nations, whereof this army [of the Crusaders] was compounded.' If the student has sufficient historical knowledge to know that in the time of the Crusades there were no Dutch in our use of the word, this statement would merely startle him; and probably before he had finished the chapter, having his attention once roused, he would perceive that Fuller with the writers of his time used 'Dutch' for German; even as it was constantly so used up to the end of the seventeenth century,—what we call now a Dutchman being then a Hollander,—and as the Americans use it to this present day. But a young student might very possibly want that amount of previous knowledge, which should cause him to receive this announcement with misgiving and surprise; and thus he might carry away altogether a wrong impression, and rise from a perusal of the book, persuaded that the Dutch, as we call them, played an important part in the Crusades, while the Germans took little or no part in them at all.

And as it is here with an historic fact, so still more often will it happen with the subtler changes

which words have undergone. Out of this it will continually happen that they convey now much more reprobation, or convey now much less, than formerly they did; or of a different kind; and a reader not aware of the altered value which they now possess, may be in continual danger of misreading his author, of misunderstanding his intention, while he has no doubt whatever that he perfectly apprehends and takes it in. Thus when Shakespeare makes the gallant York address Joan of Arc as a 'miscreant,' how coarse a piece of invective this sounds; how unlike what the chivalrous soldier would have uttered; or what one might have supposed that Shakespeare, even with his unworthy estimate of the holy warrior-maid, would have put into his mouth. But 'miscreant' in Shakespeare's time had another meaning altogether. It was simply, in agreement with its etymology, a misbeliever, one who did not believe rightly the articles of the Catholic Faith. This I need not remind you was the constant charge which the English brought against the Pucelle,—namely, that she was a dealer in hidden magical arts, a witch, and as such had fallen from the faith. On this plea they burnt her, and it is this which York intends when he calls her a 'miscreant,' and not what we should intend by the name.

In poetry above all what beauties are often missed, what forces lost, through this assumption that the present meaning of a word accurately corresponds to the past. How often the poet is wronged in our estimation; that seeming to us

now flat and pointless, which at once would lose this semblance, did we know how to read into some word the emphasis which it once had, but which now has departed from it. For example, Milton ascribes in *Comus* the '*tinsel-slippered* feet' to Thetis, the goddess of the sea. How comparatively poor an epithet this 'tinsel-slippered' sounds for those who know of 'tinsel' only in its modern acceptation of mean and cheap finery, affecting a splendour which it does not really possess. But learn its earlier use by learning its derivation, bring it back to the French 'étincelle,' and the Latin 'scintillula;' see in it, as Milton and the writers of his time saw, 'the sparkling,' and how exquisitely beautiful a title does this become applied to a sea-goddess; how vividly does it call up before our mind's eye the quick glitter and sparkle of the waves under the light of sun or moon.* It is Homer's 'silver-footed' (ἀργυρόπεζα), not servilely transferred, but reproduced and made his own by the English poet, dealing as one great poet will do with another; who will not disdain to borrow, but to what he borrows will add often a further grace of his own.

Or, again, do we keep in mind, or are we even aware, that whenever the word 'influence' occurs in our English poetry, down to comparatively a modern date, there is always more or less remote allusion to invisible illapses of power, skyey,

* So in Herrick's *Electra*:

'More white than are the whitest creams,
Or moonlight *tinselling* the streams.'

planetary effects, supposed to be exercised by the heavenly luminaries upon the lives of men? The ten occasions on which the word occurs in Shakespeare do not offer a single exception. How many a passage starts into new life and beauty and fulness of allusion, when this is present with us; even Milton's

> 'store of ladies, whose bright eyes
> Rain *influence*,'

as spectators of the tournament, gain something, when we regard them—and using this language, he intended we should— as the luminaries of this lower sphere, shedding by their propitious presence strength and valour into the hearts of their knights.

A word will sometimes even in its present acceptation yield a convenient and even a correct sense; the last I have cited would do so; we may fall into no positive misapprehension about it; and still, through ignorance of its past history and of the force which it once possessed, we may miss much of its significance. We are not *beside* the meaning of our author, but we are *short* of it. Thus in Beaumont and Fletcher's *King and no King*, (Act iii. Sc. 2,) a cowardly braggart of a soldier describes the treatment he experienced, when, like Parolles, he was at length found out, and stripped of his lion's skin:—'They hung me up by the heels and beat me with hazel sticks, . . . that the whole kingdom took notice of me for a *baffled* whipped fellow.' Were you reading this

passage, there is probably nothing which would make you pause; you would attach to 'baffled' a sense which sorts very well with the context—'hung up by the heels and beaten, all his schemes of being thought much of were *baffled* and defeated.' But 'baffled' implies far more than this; it contains allusion to a custom in the days of chivalry, according to which a perjured or recreant knight was either in person, or more commonly in effigy, hung up by the heels, his scutcheon blotted, his spear broken, and he himself or his effigy made the subject of all kinds of indignities; such a one being said to be 'baffled.'* Twice in Spenser recreant knights are so treated. I can only quote a portion of the shorter passage, in which this infamous punishment is described:

> 'And after all, for greater infamy
> He by the heels him hung upon a tree,
> And *baffled* so, that all which passéd by
> The picture of his punishment might see.'†

Probably when Beaumont and Fletcher wrote, men were not so remote from the days of chivalry, or at any rate from the literature of chivalry, but that this custom was still fresh in their minds. How much more to them than to us, so long as we are ignorant of the same, must their words just quoted have conveyed?

There are several places in the Authorized Version of Scripture, where those who are not aware

* See Holinshed, *Chronicles*, vol. iii. pp. 827, 1218: Ann. 1513, 1570.

† *Fairy Queen*, vi. 7, 27; cf. v. 3, 37.

of the changes which have taken place during the last two hundred and fifty years in our language, can hardly fail of being to a certain extent misled as to the intention of our Translators; or, if they are better acquainted with Greek than with early English, will be tempted to ascribe to them, though unjustly, an inexact rendering of the original. Thus the altered meaning of a word involves a serious misunderstanding in that well known statement of St. James, 'Pure *religion* and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction.' 'There,' exclaims one who wishes to set up St. James against St. Paul, that so he may escape the necessity of obeying either, 'listen to what St. James says; there is nothing mystical in what he requires; instead of harping on faith as a condition necessary to salvation, he makes all religion to consist in practical deeds of kindness from one to another.' But let us pause for a moment. Did 'religion,' when our Version was made, mean godliness? did it mean the *sum total* of our duties towards God? for, of course, no one would deny that deeds of charity are a necessary part of our Christian duty, an evidence of the faith which is in us. There is abundant evidence to show that 'religion' did not mean this; that, like the Greek *θρησκεία*, for which it here stands, like the Latin 'religio,' it meant the outward forms and embodiments in which the inward principle of piety arrayed itself, the *external service* of God: and St. James is urging upon those to whom he is

writing something of this kind: 'Instead of the ceremonial services of the Jews, which consisted in divers washings and in other elements of this world, let our service, our θρησκεία, take a nobler shape, let it consist in deeds of pity and of love'—and it was this which our Translators intended, when they used 'religion' here and 'religious' in the verse preceding. How little 'religion' once meant godliness, how predominantly it was used for the *outward* service of God, is plain from many passages in our *Homilies*, and from other contemporary literature.

Again, there are words in our Liturgy which I have no doubt are commonly misunderstood. The mistake involves no serious error; yet still in our own language, and in words which we have constantly in our mouths, and at most solemn times, it is certainly better to be right than wrong. In the Litany we pray God that it would please Him 'to give and preserve to our use the *kindly* fruits of the earth.' What meaning do we attach to this epithet, 'the *kindly* fruits of the earth'? Probably we understand by it those fruits in which the *kindness* of God or of nature towards us finds its expression. This is no unworthy explanation, but still it is not the right one. The '*kindly* fruits' are the '*natural* fruits,' those which the earth according to its *kind* should naturally bring forth, which it is appointed to produce. To show you how little 'kindly' meant once benignant, as it means now, I will instance an employment of it from Sir Thomas More's

Life of Richard the Third. He tells us that Richard calculated by murdering his two nephews in the Tower to make himself accounted 'a *kindly* king'—not certainly a 'kindly' one in our present usage of the word; but, having put them out of the way, that he should then be lineal heir of the Crown, and should thus be reckoned as king *by kind* or natural descent; and such was of old the constant use of the word.

A phrase in one of our occasional Services, 'with my body I thee *worship*,' has sometimes offended those who are unacquainted with the early uses of English words, and thus with the intention of the actual framers of that Service. Clearly in our modern sense of 'worship,' this language would be unjustifiable. But 'worship' or 'worthship' meant 'honour' in our early English, and 'to worship' to honour, this meaning of 'worship' still very harmlessly surviving in the title of 'your worship,' addressed to the magistrate on the bench. So little was it restrained of old to the honour which man is bound to pay to God, that it was employed by Wiclif to express the honour which God will render to his faithful servants and friends. Thus our Lord's declaration, 'If any man serve Me, him will my Father *honour*,' in Wiclif's translation reads thus, 'If any man serve Me, my Father shall *worship* him.' I do not mean that the words, 'with my body I thee *worship*,' might not profitably be changed, if only it were possible to touch things indifferent in the Prayer Book, without giving room for a meddling

with things which could not be touched without extremest hazard to the peace of the Church. I think they would be very well changed, liable as they are to misconstruction now; but for all this they did not mean at the first, and therefore do not now really mean, any other than, 'with my body I thee *honour*,' and so you may reply to any gainsayer here.

You remember the words in the Sermon on the Mount, '*Take no thought* for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink' (Matt. vi. 25). They have been often found fault with; and, to quote one of the fault-finders, 'most English critics have lamented the inadvertence of our Authorized Version, which in bidding us *take no thought* for the necessaries of life prescribed to us what is impracticable in itself, and would be a breach of Christian duty even if possible.'* But there is no 'inadvertence' here. When our Translation was made, 'Take no thought' was a perfectly correct reading of the words of the original. 'Thought' was then constantly used for painful solicitude and care. Thus Bacon writes, 'Harris an alderman was put in trouble and died of *thought* and anxiety before his business came to an end;' and in one of the *Somers Tracts* (its date is of the reign of Elizabeth) these words occur: 'In five hundred years only two queens have died in childbirth. Queen Catherine Parr died rather of *thought*.' A still better example occurs in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*—'*take thought*, and

* Scrivener, *Notes on the New Testament*, vol. i. p. 162.

die for Cæsar'—where 'to take thought' is to take a matter so seriously to heart that death ensues.

Take another example of a misapprehension, which lies very near. Fuller, our Church historian, praising some famous divine that was lately dead, exclaims, 'Oh the *painfulness* of his preaching!' How easily we might take this for an exclamation wrung out at the recollection of the tediousness which he inflicted on his hearers. It is nothing of the kind; the words are a record not of the *pain* which he caused to others, but of the *pains* which he bestowed himself: and I am persuaded, if we had more 'painful' preachers in the old sense of the word, that is, who *took* pains themselves, we should have fewer 'painful' ones in the modern sense, who *cause* pain to their hearers. So too Bishop Grosthead is recorded as 'the *painful* writer of two hundred books'—not meaning hereby that these books were 'painful' in the reading, but that he was laborious and 'painful' in their composing.

Here is another easy misapprehension. Swift wrote a pamphlet, or, as he called it, a *Letter to the Lord Treasurer*, with this title, 'A proposal for correcting, improving, and *ascertaining* the English Tongue.' Who that brought a knowledge of present English, and no more, to this passage, would doubt that '*ascertaining* the English Tongue' meant arriving at a certain knowledge of what it was? Swift, however, means something quite different from this. '*To ascertain* the English tongue' was not with him to

arrive at a subjective certainty in our own minds of what that tongue is, but to give an objective certainty to that tongue itself, so that henceforth it should not change any more. For even Swift himself, with all his masculine sense, entertained a dream of this kind, fancied that the growth of a language might be arrested, as is more fully declared in the work itself.*

In other places unacquaintance with the changes in a word's usage may leave you sorely perplexed and puzzled as to your author's meaning. It is evident that he has a meaning, but what it is you are unable to divine, even though all the words he employs are familiarly employed to the present day. Thus 'courtly Waller,' congratulating Charles the Second on his return from exile, and describing how men, once the most hostile to him, were now seeking his favour, writes thus:

> 'Offenders now, the chiefest, do begin
> To strive for grace, and expiate their sin:
> All winds blow fair that did the world embroil,
> *Your vipers treacle yield*, and scorpions oil.'

Many a reader before now will have been perplexed at the poet's statement that '*vipers treacle yield*'—who yet have been too indolent, or who have not had the opportunity, to search out what his meaning might be. There is in fact allusion here to a curious piece of legendary lore. 'Treacle,' or 'triacle,' as Chaucer wrote it, was originally a Greek word, and wrapped up in itself the once

* *Works* (Sir W. Scott's edition), vol. ix. p. 139.

popular belief (an anticipation, by the way, of homœopathy), that a confection of the viper's flesh was the most potent antidote against the viper's bite.* Waller falls back on this old legend, familiar enough in his time, for Milton speaks of 'the sovran *treacle* of sound doctrine,'† while 'Venice treacle,' or 'viper wine,' was a common name for a supposed antidote against all poisons; and would say that regicides themselves began to be loyal, vipers not now yielding hurt any more, but rather a healing medicine for the old hurts which they themselves had inflicted. 'Treacle,' it may be observed, designating first this antidote, came next to designate any antidote, then any medicinal confection or sweet syrup; and lastly that particular syrup, namely, the sweet syrup of molasses, to which alone we restrict it now.

I will draw on Fuller for one more illustration. In his *Holy War*, having enumerated the rabble rout of fugitive debtors, runaway slaves, thieves, adulterers, murderers, of men laden for one cause

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* Θηριακή, from θηρίον, a designation given to the viper, see Acts xxviii. 4. 'Theriac' is only the more rigid form of the same word, the scholarly, as distinguished from the popular, adoption of it. Augustine (*Con. duas Epp. Pelag.* iii 7): Sicut fieri consuevit antidotum etiam de serpentibus contra venena serpentum.

† And Chaucer, more solemnly still:

> 'Christ, which that is to every harm *triacle*.'

The *antidotal* character of treacle comes out yet more in these lines of Lydgate:

> 'There is no *venom* so parlious in sharpnes,
> As whan it hath of *treacle* a likenes.'

or another with heaviest censures of the Church, who swelled the ranks, and helped to make up the army, of the Crusaders, he exclaims, 'A lamentable case, that the devil's *black guard* should be God's soldiers!' What does he mean, we may ask, by 'the devil's *black guard*'? The phrase does not stand here alone; it is, on the contrary, of frequent recurrence in the early dramatists and others down to the time of Dryden; in whose *Don Sebastian*, 'Enter the captain of the rabble, with the *Black guard*,' is a stage direction. What is this 'black guard'? Has it any connection with a word of our homeliest vernacular? None which is very apparent, and yet such as may very clearly be traced. In old times, the palaces of our kings and seats of our nobles were not so well and completely furnished as at the present day: and thus it was customary, when a royal progress was made, or when the great nobility exchanged one residence for another, that at such a removal all kitchen utensils, pots and pans, and even coals, should be also carried with them where they went. Those who accompanied and escorted these, the meanest and dirtiest of the retainers, were called 'the black guard;'* then any troop or company of ragamuffins; and lastly, when the word's history was obscured and men forgot that it properly belonged to a company, to a rabble rout, and not a single

* 'A slave, that within these twenty years rode with the *black guard* in the Duke's carriage, 'mongst spits and dripping pans' (Webster, *White Devil*, Act i. Sc. 1).

person, one would compliment another, not as belonging to, but as himself being, the 'blackguard.'

These examples are sufficient to prove that it is not a useless and unprofitable study, nor yet one altogether without entertainment, to which I invite you; so far from this, that any one who desires to read with accuracy, and thus with advantage and pleasure, our earlier classics, who would not often fall short of, and often go astray from, their meaning, must needs bestow some attention on the altered significance of English words. And if this is so, we could not more usefully employ what remains of this present lecture than in seeking to indicate those changes which words most frequently undergo; and to trace as far as we can the causes, moral and material, which bring these changes about, with the good and the evil out of which they have sprung, and to which they bear witness. For indeed these changes are not changes at random, but for the most part are obedient to certain laws, are capable of being distributed into certain classes, being the outward transcripts and attestations of mental and moral processes which have inwardly gone forward in those who bring them about. Many, it is true, will escape any classification of ours; will seem to us the result of mere caprice, and not to be accounted for by any principle to which we can appeal. But all this admitted freely, a majority will remain which are reducible to

some law or other, and with these we will occupy ourselves now.

And first, the meaning of a word oftentimes is gradually narrowed. It was once as a generic name, embracing many as yet unnamed species within itself, which all went by its common designation. By and bye it is found convenient that each of these should have its own more special sign allotted to it.* It is here just as in some newly enclosed country, where a single household will at first loosely occupy a whole district; this same district being in the course of time parcelled out among twenty proprietors, and under more accurate culture employing and sustaining them all. Thus all food was once called 'meat;' it is so in our Bible, and 'horse-meat' for fodder is still no unusual phrase; yet 'meat' is now a name given only to flesh. Any little book or writing was a 'libel' once; now only such a one as is scurrilous and injurious. Every leader was a 'duke' (dux); thus '*duke* Hannibal' (Sir Thomas Elyot), '*duke* Brennus' (Holland), '*duke* Theseus' (Shakespeare), '*duke* Amalek,' with other 'dukes' (Gen. xxxvi.). Every journey, by land as much as by sea, was a 'voyage.' 'Fairy' was not a name restricted, as now, to the *Gothic* mythology; thus 'the *fairy* Egeria' (Sir J. Harrington). A 'corpse' might quite as well be a body living as one dead.

* Génin (*Lexique de la Langue de Molière*, p. 367) says well: En augmentant le nombre des mots, il a fallu restreindre leur signification, et faire aux nouveaux un apanage aux dépens des anciens.

'Weeds' were whatever covered the earth or the person; while now as respects the earth, those only are 'weeds' which are noxious, or at least self-sown; as regards the person, we speak of no other 'weeds' but the widow's. In each of these cases, the same contraction of meaning, the separating off and assigning to other words of large portions of this, has found place. 'To starve' (the German 'sterben,' and generally spelt 'sterve' up to the middle of the seventeenth century), meant once to die any manner of death; thus Chaucer says, Christ '*sterved* upon the cross for our redemption;' it now is restricted to the dying by cold or by hunger. Words not a few were once applied to both sexes alike, which are now restricted to the female. It is so even with 'girl,' which was once a young person of either sex;* while other words in this list, such for instance as 'hoyden' (Milton, prose), 'shrew' (Chaucer), 'coquet' (Phillips, *New World of Words*), 'witch' (Wiclif), 'termagant' (Bale), 'scold,' 'jade,' 'hag,' 'slut' (Gower), must, in their present exclusive appropriation to the female sex, be regarded as evidences of men's rudeness, and not of women's deserts.

The necessities of an advancing civilization demand more precision and accuracy in the use of words having to do with weight, measure, number,

* And no less so in French with 'dame,' by which form not 'domina' only, but 'dominus,' was represented. Thus in early French poetry, '*Dame* Dieu' for '*Dominus* Deus' continually occurs.

size. Almost all such words as 'acre,' 'furlong,' 'yard,' 'gallon,' 'peck,' were once of a vague and unsettled use, and only at a later day, and in obedience to the requirements of commerce and social life, exact measures and designations. Thus every field was once an 'acre;' and this remains so still with the German 'acker,' and with us when we give the name of 'God's' acre to ground where we lay our dead; it was not till about the reign of Edward the First that 'acre' was commonly restricted to a determined measure and portion of land. Here and there even now a glebeland will be called 'the acre;' and this, though it should contain not one but many of our measured acres. A 'furlong' was a 'furrowlong,' or length of a furrow.* Any pole was a 'yard,' and this vaguer use survives in 'sail*yard*,' 'hal*yard*,' and in other sea-terms. Every pitcher was a 'galon' (Mark xiv. 13, Wiclif), while a 'peck' was no more than a 'poke' or bag. And the same has taken place in all other languages. The Greek 'drachm' was at first a handful (δραχμή='manipulus,' from δράσσομαι, to grasp as much as you could hold in the fingers); the later word for ten thousand (μύριοι) implied in Homer's time any great multitude; and, differently accented, retained this meaning.

Opposite to this is a counter-process by which words of narrower intention gradually enlarge the

* 'A *furlong*, quasi *furrowlong*, being so much as a team in England plougheth going forward, before they return back again' (Fuller, *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, p. 42).

domain of their meaning, becoming capable of much wider application than any which once they admitted. Instances in this kind are fewer than in the last. The main stream and course of human thoughts and human discourse tends the other way, to discerning, distinguishing, dividing; and then to the permanent fixing of the distinctions gained, by the aid of designations which shall keep apart for ever in word that which has been once severed and sundered in thought. Nor is it hard to perceive why this process should be the more frequent. Men are first struck with the pointed likeness between those things which are presented to them; on the strength of which they bracket them under a common term. Further acquaintance reveals their points of unlikeness, the real dissimilarities which lurk under superficial resemblances, the need therefore of a different notation for objects which are essentially different. It is comparatively much rarer to discover real likeness under what at first appeared as unlikeness; and usually when a word moves forward, and from a specialty indicates now a generality, it is not in obedience to any such discovery of the true inner likeness of things,—the steps of successful generalizations being marked and secured in other ways. But this widening of a word's meaning is too often a result of quite other causes. Men forget a word's history and etymology; its distinctive features are obliterated for them, with all which attached it to some thought or fact which by right was its own. All

words in some sort are faded metaphors, but this is one of which the fading has become absolute and complete. Appropriated and restricted once to some striking speciality which it vigorously set out, it can now be used in a wider, vaguer, more unsettled way. It can be employed twenty times for once when it would have been possible formerly to employ it. Yet this is not gain, but pure loss. It has lost its place in the disciplined *army* of words, and become one of a loose and disorderly *mob*.

Let me instance 'preposterous.' It is now no longer of any practical service at all in the language, being merely an ungraceful and slipshod synonym for absurd. But restore and confine it to its old use; let it designate that one peculiar branch of absurdity which it designated once, namely the reversing of the true order of things, the putting of the last first, and, by consequence, of the first last, and what excellent service it would yield. Thus it is 'preposterous' to put the cart before the horse, to expect wages before the work is done, to hang a man first and try him afterwards; and in this stricter sense 'preposterous' was always used by our elder writers.

In like manner 'to prevaricate' was never employed by good writers of the seventeenth century without nearer or more remote allusion to the uses of the word in the Roman law courts, where a 'prævaricator' (properly a straddler with distorted legs) did not mean generally and loosely, as now with us, one who shuffles, quibbles, and

evades; but one who played false in a particular manner; who, undertaking, or being by his office bound, to prosecute a charge, was in secret collusion with the opposite party; and, betraying the cause which he affected to support, so managed the accusation as to obtain not the condemnation, but the acquittal, of the accused; a 'feint pleader,' as in our old law language he would have been termed. How much force would the keeping of this in mind add to many passages in our elder divines.

Or take 'equivocal,' 'equivocate,' 'equivocation.' These words, which belonged at first to logic, have slipped into common use, and in so doing have lost all the precision of their first employment. 'Equivocation' is now almost any such dealing in ambiguous words with the intention of deceiving, as falls short of an actual lie; but according to etymology and in primary use 'equivocation,' this fruitful mother of so much error, is the calling by the same name, of things essentially diverse, hiding intentionally or otherwise a real difference under a verbal resemblance.* Nor let it be urged in defence of the present looser use, that only so could it serve the needs of our ordinary conversation; so far from this, had it retained its first use, how serviceable an implement of thought might it have been in detecting our own fallacies, or

* Thus Barrow: 'Which [courage and constancy] he that wanteth is no other than *equivocally* a gentleman, as an image or a carcass is a man.'

those of others; all which it can now be no longer.

What now is 'idea' for us? How infinite the fall of this word since the time when Milton sang of the Creator contemplating his newly created world,

> 'how it showed,
> Answering his great *idea*,'

to the present use, when this person 'has an *idea* that the train has started,' and the other 'had no *idea* that the dinner would be so bad.' But 'idea' is perhaps the worst treated word in the English language. Matters have not mended since the times of Dr. Johnson; who, as Boswell tells us, 'was particularly indignant against the almost universal use of the word *idea* in the sense of *notion* or *opinion*, when it is clear that *idea* can only signify something of which an image can be formed in the mind.' There is perhaps no word in the whole compass of the language so seldom employed with any tolerable correctness; in none is the distance so immense between what properly it means, and the slovenly uses which popularly it is made to serve.

This tendency in words to lose the sharp, rigidly defined outline of meaning which they once possessed, to become of wide, vague, loose application instead of fixed, definite, and precise, to mean almost anything, and so really to mean nothing, is among the most fatally effectual which are at work for the final ruin of a language, and, I do not fear to add, for the demoralization of those

that speak it. It is one against which we shall all do well to watch; for there is none of us who cannot do something in keeping words close to their own proper meaning, and in resisting their encroachment on the domain of others.

The causes which bring this mischief about are not hard to trace. We all know that when a piece of our silver money has long fulfilled its part, as 'pale and common drudge 'tween man and man,' whatever it had at first of sharper outline and livelier impress is in the end wholly obliterated from it. So it is with words, above all with words of science and theology. These, getting into general use, and passing often from mouth to mouth, lose the 'image and superscription' which they had, before they descended from the school to the market-place, from the pulpit to the street. Being now caught up by those who understand imperfectly and thus incorrectly their true value, who will not be at the pains of learning what that is, or who are incapable of so doing, they are obliged to accommodate themselves to the lower sphere in which they circulate, by laying aside much of the precision and accuracy and fulness which once they had; they become weaker, shallower, more indistinct; till in the end, as exponents of thought and feeling, they cease to be of any service at all.

Sometimes a word does not merely narrow or extend its meaning, but altogether changes it; and this it does in more ways than one. Thus a

secondary figurative sense will quite put out of use and extinguish the literal, until in the entire predominance of that it is altogether forgotten that it ever possessed any other. In 'bombast' this forgetfulness is nearly complete. What 'bombast' now means is familiar to us all, namely inflated words, 'full of sound and fury,' but 'signifying nothing.' This, at present the sole meaning, was once only the secondary and superinduced; 'bombast' being properly the cotton plant, and then the cotton wadding with which garments were stuffed out and lined. You remember perhaps how Prince Hal addresses Falstaff, 'How now, my sweet creature of *bombast*;' using the word in its literal sense; and another early poet has this line:

> 'Thy body's bolstered out with *bombast* and with bags.'

'Bombast' was then transferred in a vigorous image to the big words without strength or solidity wherewith the discourses of some were stuffed out, and has now quite forgone any other meaning. So too 'to garble' was once 'to cleanse from dross and dirt, as grocers do their spices, to pick or cull out.'* It is never used now in this its primary sense, and has indeed undergone this further change, that while once 'to garble' was to sift for the purpose of selecting the best, it is now to sift with a view of picking out the worst.† 'Polite'

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* Phillips, *New World of Words*, 1706.

† 'But his [Gideon's] army must be *garbled*, as too great for

is another word which in the figurative sense has quite extinguished the literal. We still speak of 'polished' surfaces; but not any more, with Cudworth, of '*polite* bodies, as looking glasses.' Neither do we now 'exonerate' a ship (Burton); nor 'stigmatize,' otherwise than figuratively, a 'malefactor' (the same); nor 'corroborate' our health (Sir Thomas Elyot).

Again, a word will travel on by slow and regularly progressive courses of change, itself a faithful index of changes going on in society and in the minds of men, till at length everything is changed about it. The process of this it is often very curious to observe; being one which it is possible to watch as step by step it advances to the final consummation. There may be said to be three leading phases which the word successively presents, three stages in its history. At first it grows naturally out of its own root, is filled with its own natural meaning. Presently it allows another meaning, one foreign to its etymology, and superinduced on the earlier, to share possession with this, on the ground that where one exists, the other commonly exists with it. At the third step, the newly introduced meaning, not satisfied with a moiety, with dividing the possession of the word, has thrust out the original and rightful possessor altogether, and reigns henceforward alone. The three successive stages may be represented

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God to give victory thereby; all the fearful return home by proclamation' (Fuller, *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, b. ii. c. 8).

by *a*, *ab*, *b*; in which series *b*, which was wanting altogether at the first stage, and was only admitted as secondary at the second, does at the third become primary and indeed in sole and exclusive possession.

We must not suppose that in actual fact the transitions from one signification to another are so strongly and distinctly marked, as I have found it convenient to mark them here. Indeed it is hard to imagine anything more gradual, more subtle and imperceptible, than the process of change. The manner in which the new meaning first insinuates itself into the old, and then drives out the old, can only be compared to the process of petrifaction, as rightly understood—the water not gradually turning what is put into it to stone, as we generally take the operation to be; but successively displacing each several particle of that which is brought within its power, and depositing a stony particle in its stead, till, in the end, while all appears to continue the same, all has in fact been thoroughly changed. It is precisely thus, by such slow, gradual, and subtle advances that the new meaning filters through and pervades the word, little by little displacing entirely that which it formerly possessed.

No word would illustrate this process better than that old example, familiar probably to us all, of 'villain.' The 'villain' is, first, the serf or peasant, 'villanus,' because attached to the 'villa' or farm. He is, secondly, the peasant who, it is further taken for granted, will be

churlish, selfish, dishonest, and generally of evil moral conditions, these having come to be assumed as always belonging to him, and to be permanently associated with his name, by those higher classes of society who in the main commanded the springs of language. At the third step, nothing of the meaning which the etymology suggests, nothing of 'villa,' survives any longer; the peasant is wholly dismissed, and the evil moral conditions of him who is called by this name alone remain; * so that the name would now in this its final stage be applied as freely to peer, if he deserved it, as to peasant. 'Boor' has had exactly the same history; being first the cultivator of the soil; then secondly, the cultivator of the soil who, it is assumed, will be coarse, rude, and unmannerly; and then thirdly, any one who is coarse, rude, and unmannerly. So too 'pagan;' which is first villager, then heathen villager, and lastly heathen. You may trace the same progress in 'churl,' 'clown,' 'antic,' and in numerous other words. The intrusive meaning might be likened in all these cases to the egg which the cuckoo lays in the sparrow's nest; the young cuckoo first sharing the nest with its rightful

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* Epigrams like the following, and they are innumerable in the middle ages, sufficiently explain the successive phases of meaning through which 'villain' has passed:

Quando mulcetur villanus, pejor habetur:
Ungentem pungit, pungentem rusticus ungit.

occupants, but not resting till it has dislodged and ousted them altogether.

I will illustrate by the aid of one word more this part of my subject. I called your attention in my last lecture to the true character of several words and forms in use among our country people, and claimed for them to be in many instances genuine English, although English now more or less antiquated and overlived. 'Gossip' is a word in point. I have myself heard this name given by our Hampshire peasantry to the sponsors in baptism, the godfathers and godmothers. This is a perfectly correct employment of 'gossip,' in fact its proper and original one, and involves moreover a very curious record of past beliefs. 'Gossip,' or 'gossib,' as Chaucer spelt it, is a compound word, made up of the name of 'God,' and of an old Anglo-Saxon word, 'sib,' still alive in Scotland, as all readers of Walter Scott will remember, and in some parts of England, and which means, akin; they were said to be 'sib,' who are related to one another. But why, you may ask, was the name given to sponsors? Out of this reason;—in the middle ages it was the prevailing belief (and the Romish Church still affirms it), that those who stood as sponsors to the same child, besides contracting spiritual obligations on behalf of that child, also contracted spiritual affinity one with another; they became *sib*, or akin, in *God*; and thus 'gossips;' hence 'gossipred,' an old word, exactly analogous to 'kindred.' Out of this faith the Roman Catholic Church will not allow (unless

by dispensation), those who have stood as sponsors to the same child, afterwards to contract marriage with one another, affirming them too nearly related for this to be lawful.

Take 'gossip' however in its ordinary present use, as one addicted to idle tittle-tattle, and it seems to bear no relation whatever to its etymology and first meaning. The same three steps, however, which we have traced before will bring us to its present use. 'Gossips' are, first, the sponsors, brought by the act of a common sponsorship into affinity and near familiarity with one another; secondly, these sponsors, who being thus brought together, allow themselves with one another in familiar, and then in trivial and idle, talk; thirdly, they are any who allow themselves in this trivial and idle talk,—called in French 'commérage,' from the fact that 'commère' has run through exactly the same stages as its English equivalent.

It is plain that words which designate not things and persons only, but these as they are contemplated more or less in an ethical light, words which are tinged with a moral sentiment, are peculiarly exposed to change; are constantly liable to take a new colouring, or to lose an old. The gauge and measure of praise or blame, honour or dishonour, admiration or abhorrence, which they convey, is so purely a mental and subjective one, that it is most difficult to take accurate note of its rise or of its fall, while yet there are causes continually leading it to the one or the other. There are

words not a few, ethical words above all, which have so imperceptibly drifted away from their former moorings, that although their position is now very different from that which they once occupied, scarcely one in a hundred of casual readers, whose attention has not been specially called to the subject, will have observed that they have moved at all. Here too we observe some words conveying less of praise or blame than once, and some more; while some have wholly shifted from the one to the other. Some were at one time words of slight, almost of offence, which have altogether ceased to be so now. Still these are rare by comparison with those which once were harmless, but now are harmless no more; which once, it may be, were terms of honour, but which now imply a slight or even a scorn. It is only too easy to perceive why these should exceed those in number.

Let us take an example or two. To speak now of royal children as 'royal *imps*,' would sound, and according to our present usage would be, impertinent and unbecoming enough; and yet 'imp' was once a name of dignity and honour, and not of slight or of undue familiarity. Thus Spenser addresses the Muses,

> 'Ye sacred *imps* that on Parnasso dwell;'

and 'imp' was especially used of the scions of royal or illustrious houses. More than one epitaph, still existing, of our ancient nobility might be quoted, beginning in such language as this,

'Here lies that noble *imp*.' Or what should we say of a poet who commenced a solemn poem in this fashion,

> 'Oh Israel, oh household of the Lord,
> Oh Abraham's *brats*, oh brood of blessed seed'?

Could we conclude but that he meant, by using low words on lofty occasions, to turn sacred things into ridicule? Yet this was very far from the intention of Gascoigne, the poet whose lines I have just quoted. 'Abraham's *brats*' was used by him in perfect good faith, and without the slightest feeling that anything ludicrous or contemptuous adhered to 'brat,' as indeed in his time there did not, any more than adheres to 'brood,' which is another form of the same word now.

Call a person 'pragmatical,' and you now imply not merely that he is busy, but *over*-busy, officious, self-important, and pompous to boot. But it once meant nothing of the kind, and 'pragmatical' (like πραγματικός) was one engaged in affairs, being an honourable title, given to a man simply and industriously accomplishing the business which properly concerned him.* So too to say that a person 'meddles' or is a 'meddler' implies now that he interferes unduly in other men's matters, without a call mixing himself up

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* 'We cannot always be contemplative, or *pragmatical* abroad: but have need of some delightful intermissions, wherein the enlarged soul may leave off awhile her severe schooling' (Milton, *Tetrachordon*).

with them. This was not insinuated in the earlier uses of the word. On the contrary three of our earlier translations of the Bible have, '*Meddle* with your own business.' (1 Thess. iv. 11); and Barrow in one of his sermons draws at some length the distinction between 'meddling' and 'being *meddlesome*,' and only condemns the latter.

Or take again the words, 'to prose' or a 'proser.' It cannot indeed be affirmed that they involve any *moral* condemnation, yet they certainly convey no compliment now; and are almost among the last which any one would desire should with justice be applied either to his talking or his writing. For 'to prose,' as we all now know too well, is to talk or write heavily and tediously, without spirit and without animation; but once it was simply the antithesis of to versify, and a 'proser' the antithesis of a versifier or a poet. It will follow that the most rapid and liveliest writer who ever wrote, if he did not write in verse would have 'prosed' and been a 'proser,' in the language of our ancestors. Thus Drayton writes of his contemporary Nashe:

> 'And surely Nashe, though he a *proser* were,
> A branch of laurel yet deserves to bear;'

that is, the ornament not of a 'proser,' but of a poet. The tacit assumption that vigour, animation, rapid movement, with all the precipitation of the spirit, belong to verse rather than to prose, and are the exclusive possession of it, is that

which must explain the changed uses of the word.

Still it is according to a word's present signification that we must employ it now. It would be no excuse, having applied an insulting epithet to any, if we should afterwards plead that, tried by its etymology and primary usage, it had nothing offensive or insulting about it; although indeed Swift assures us that in his time such a plea was made and was allowed. 'I remember,' he says, 'at a trial in Kent, where Sir George Rooke was indicted for calling a gentleman "knave" and "villain," the lawyer for the defendant brought off his client by alledging that the words were not injurious; for "knave" in the old and true signification imported only a servant; and "villain" in Latin is villicus, which is no more than a man employed in country labour, or rather a baily.' The lawyer may have deserved his success for the ingenuity and boldness of his plea; though, if Swift reports him aright, not certainly on the ground of the strict accuracy either of his Anglo-Saxon or his Latin.

The moral sense and conviction of men is often at work upon their words, giving them new turns in obedience to these convictions, of which their changed use will then remain a permanent record. The history of 'sycophant' will illustrate this. You probably are acquainted with the story which the Greek scholiasts invented by way of explaining a word of which they knew nothing,—namely that the 'sycophant' was a

'manifester of figs,' one who detected others in the act of exporting figs from Attica, an act forbidden, they asserted, by the Athenian law; and accused them to the people. Be this explanation worth what it may, the word obtained in Greek a more general sense; any accuser, and then any *false* accuser, was a 'sycophant;' and when the word was first adopted into English, it was in this meaning: thus an old poet speaks of 'the railing route of *sycophants*;' and Holland: 'The poor man that hath nought to lose, is not afraid of the *sycophant*.' But it has not kept this meaning; a 'sycophant' is now a fawning flatterer; not one who speaks ill of you behind your back; rather one who speaks good of you before your face, but good which he does not in his heart believe. Yet how true a moral instinct has presided over this changed signification. The calumniator and the flatterer, although they seem so opposed to one another, how closely united they really are. They grow out of the same root. The same baseness of spirit which shall lead one to speak evil of you behind your back, will lead him to fawn on you and flatter you before your face. There is a profound sense in that Italian proverb, 'Who flatters me before, spatters me behind.'

But it is not the moral sense only of men which is thus at work, modifying their words; but the immoral as well. If the good which men have and feel, penetrates into their speech, and leaves its deposit there, so does also the evil. Thus we may trace a constant tendency—in too

many cases it has been a successful one—to empty words employed in the condemnation of evil, of the depth and earnestness of the moral reprobation which they once conveyed. Men's too easy toleration of sin, the feebleness of their moral indignation against it, brings this about, namely that the blame which words expressed once, has in some of them become much weaker now than once, from others has vanished altogether. 'To do a *shrewd* turn,' was once to do a *wicked* turn; and Chaucer, using 'shrewdness' by which to translate the Latin 'improbitas,' shows that it meant wickedness for him; nay, two murderers he calls two 'shrews,'—for there were, as already noticed, male 'shrews' once as well as female. But 'a *shrewd* turn' now, while it implies a certain amount of sharp dealing, yet implies nothing more; and 'shrewdness' is applied to men rather in their praise than in their dispraise. And not these only, but a multitude of other words,—I will only instance 'prank,' 'flirt,' 'luxury,' 'luxurious,' 'peevish,' 'wayward,' 'loiterer,' 'uncivil,'—involved once a much more earnest moral disapprobation than they do at this present.

But I must bring this lecture to a close. I have but opened to you paths, which you, if you are so minded, can follow up for yourselves. We have learned lately to speak of men's 'antecedents;' the phrase is newly come up; and it is common to say that if we would know what a man really now is, we must know his 'antecedents,' that is, what he has been in time past. This is

quite as true about words. If we would know what they now are, we must know what they have been; we must know, if possible, the date and place of their birth, the successive stages of their subsequent history, the company which they have kept, all the road which they have travelled, and what has brought them to the point at which now we find them; we must know, in short, their antecedents.

And let me say, without attempting to bring back school into these lectures which are out of school, that, seeking to do this, we might add an interest to our researches in the lexicon and the dictionary which otherwise they could never have; that taking such words, for example, as ἐκκλησία, or παλιγγενεσία, or εὐτραπελία, or σοφιστής, or σχολαστικός, in Greek; as 'religio,' or 'sacramentum,' or 'urbanitas,' or 'superstitio,' in Latin; as 'libertine,' or 'casuistry,'* or 'humanity,' or 'humourous,' or 'danger,' or 'romance,' in English, and endeavouring to trace the manner in which one meaning grew out of and superseded another, and how they arrived at that use in which they have finally rested (if indeed before our English words there is not a future still), we shall derive, I believe, amusement, I am sure, instruction; we shall feel that we are really getting something, increasing the moral and intellectual stores of our minds; furnishing ourselves with

* See Whewell, *History of Moral Philosophy in England*, pp. xxvii.—xxxii.

that which may hereafter be of service to ourselves, may be of service to others—than which there can be no feeling more pleasurable, none more dèlightful. I shall be glad and thankful, if you can feel as much in regard of that lecture, which I now bring to an end.*

* For a fuller treatment of the subject of this lecture, see my *Select Glossary of English Words used formerly in Senses different from their present*, 3rd ed., London and Cambridge, 1865.

LECTURE VIII.

CHANGES IN THE SPELLING OF ENGLISH WORDS.

THE subject of my lecture to-day will be English orthography, and it will be mainly taken up with notices of some changes which this has undergone. You may think perhaps that a weightier, or at all events a more interesting, subject might have claimed our attention to-day. But it is indeed one wanting neither in importance nor in interest. Unimportant it is not, having often engaged the attention of the foremost scholars among us. Uninteresting it may be, through faults in the manner of its treatment; but would never prove so in competent hands.* Let me hope that even in mine it may yield some pleasure and profit.

I know not who it was that said, 'The invention of printing was very well; but, as compared to the invention of writing, it was no such great matter after all.' Whoever made this observation, for him use and familiarity had not obliterated

* Let me refer, in proof, to a paper, *On Orthographical Expedients*, by Edwin Guest, Esq., in the *Transactions of the Philological Society*, vol. iii. p. 1.

the wonder of that, at which we probably have long ceased to wonder, if indeed the marvel of it ever presented itself to our minds at all—the power, namely, of representing sounds by written signs, of reproducing for the eye what existed at first only for the ear. Nor was the estimate which he formed of the relative value of these two inventions other than a just one. Writing stands more nearly on a level with speaking, and deserves better to be compared with it, than with printing; which last, with all its utility, is yet of quite another and inferior type of greatness: or, if this be too much to claim for writing, it may at all events be affirmed to stand midway between the other two, and to be as much superior to the one as it is inferior to the other.

The intention of the written word, the end whereto it is a mean, is by aid of signs agreed on beforehand, to represent to the eye with as much accuracy as possible the spoken word. This intention, however, it never fulfils completely. There is always a chasm between these two, and much going forward in a language to render this chasm ever wider and wider. Short as man's spoken word often falls of his thought, his written word falls often as short of his spoken. Several causes contribute to this. In the first place, the marks of imperfection and infirmity cleave to writing, as to every other invention of man. It fares with almost all alphabets as with our own. They have superfluous letters, letters which they do not want, because others already represent their sound;

they have dubious letters, such, that is, as say nothing certain about the sounds they stand for, because more than one sound is represented by them—our own 'a' for example; they are deficient in letters, that is, the language has elementary sounds such as our own 'th' which have no corresponding letters appropriated to them, and can only be represented by combinations of letters. This then is one reason of the imperfect reproduction of the spoken word by the written. But another is, that the human voice is so wonderfully fine and flexible an organ, is able to mark such subtle and delicate distinctions of sound, so infinitely to modify and vary these sounds, that were an alphabet complete as human art could make it, did it possess twice as many letters as our own possesses,—the Sanscrit, which has fifty, very nearly does so,—there would still remain a multitude of sounds which it could only approximately give back.

But there is a further cause for the divergence which little by little becomes apparent between men's spoken words and their written. What men do often, they will seek to do with the least possible trouble. There is nothing which they do oftener than repeat words; they will seek here then to save themselves pains; they will contract two or more syllables into one; 'vuestra merced' will become 'usted;' and 'topside the other way,' 'topsy-turvey;'* or draw two or three

* See *Stanihurst's Ireland*, p. 33, in Holinshed's *Chronicles*.

syllables together, 'itiner' will become 'iter,' and 'almesse' 'alms;' they will slur over, and thus after a while cease to pronounce, certain letters, especially at the close of words, where the speaking effort has in a manner exhausted itself; for hard letters they will substitute soft; for those which require a certain effort to pronounce, they will substitute those which require little or almost none.* Under the operation of these causes a gulf between the written and spoken word will not merely exist; but it will have the tendency to grow ever wider and wider. This tendency indeed will be partially traversed by approximations which from time to time will by silent consent be made of the written word to the spoken; absolutely superfluous letters will be got rid of; the 'Engleneloande' of Henry the Third's famous proclamation (1258) will become the 'England' which we now write, seven letters instead of thirteen; here and there a letter dropped in speech will be dropped also in writing, as the 's' in so many French words, where its absence is marked by a circumflex; a new shape, contracted or briefer, which a word has taken on

* Schleicher (*Die Deutsche Sprache*, p. 49): Alle Veränderung der Laute, die im Verlaufe des sprachlichen Lebens eintritt, ist zunächst und unmittelbar Folge des Strebens, unseren Sprachorganen die Sache leicht zu machen. Bequemlichkeit der Aussprache, Ersparung an Muskelthätigkeit ist das hier wirkende Agens. Who does not feel, for instance, how much the *mêteres* of Greek, with its thrice recurring 'e,' has gained in facility of being spoken over the earlier *mâtaras*, with its thrice recurring 'a,' of the Sanscrit?

the lips of men, will find its representation in their writing; as 'chirurgeon' will not merely be pronounced, but also spelt, 'surgeon,' and 'synodsman' 'sidesman,' and 'squinancy' 'quinsey.' Still, notwithstanding these partial readjustments of the relations between the two, the anomalies will be infinite; there will be a multitude of written letters which have ceased to be sounded letters; words not a few will exist in one shape upon our lips, and in quite another in our books.

It is inevitable that the question should arise—Shall these anomalies be meddled with? shall it be attempted to remove them, and to bring writing and speech into harmony and consent—a harmony and consent which never indeed in actual fact at any period of the language existed, but which yet may be regarded as the object of written speech, as the idea which, however imperfectly realized, has, in the reduction of spoken sounds to written, floated before the minds of men? If the attempt is to be made, it is clear that it can only be made in one way. There is not the alternative here that either Mahomet shall go to the mountain, *or* the mountain to Mahomet. The spoken word is the mountain; it will not stir; it will resist all attempts to move it. Conscious of superior rights, that it existed the first, that it is, so to say, the elder brother, it will never consent to become different from what it has been, that so it may more closely conform and comply with the written word. Men would not be persuaded to pronounce 'wou*l*d' and 'de*b*t,' because they write

these words severally with an 'l' and with a 'b': but what if they could be induced to write 'woud' and 'det,' because they so pronounce; and to adopt the same course wherever a discrepancy existed between the word as spoken, and as written?

Here we have the explanation of that which in the history of almost all literatures has repeated itself more than once, namely, the endeavour to introduce phonetic writing. It has certain plausibilities to rest on; it appeals to the unquestionable fact that the written word was intended to picture to the eye what the spoken word sounded in the ear. For all this I believe that it would be impossible to introduce it; and, even if possible, that it would be most undesirable, and this for two reasons; the first being that the losses consequent upon its introduction would far outweigh the gains, even supposing those gains as great as the advocates of the scheme promise; the second, that these promised gains would themselves be only very partially realized, or not at all.

I believe it to be impossible. It is clear that such a scheme must begin with the reconstruction of the alphabet. The first thing that the phonographers have perceived is the necessity for the creation of a vast number of new signs, the poverty of all existing alphabets, at any rate of our own, not yielding a several sign for all the several sounds in the language. Our English phonographers have therefore had to invent ten of these new signs or letters, which are henceforth

to take their place with our *a*, *b*, *c*, and to enjoy equal rights with them. Rejecting two (*q*, *x*), and adding ten, they have raised their alphabet from twenty-six letters to thirty-four. But to procure the reception of such a reconstructed alphabet is simply an impossibility, as much an impossibility as would be the reconstitution of the structure of the language in any points where it was manifestly deficient or illogical. Sciolists or scholars may sit down in their studies, and devise these new letters, and prove that we need them, and that the introduction of them would be a manifest gain; and this may be all very true: but if they imagine that they can persuade a people to adopt them, they know little of the ways in which its alphabet is entwined with the whole innermost life of a people.* One may freely own that most present alphabets are redundant here, are deficient there; our English perhaps is as greatly at fault as any, and with that we have chiefly to do. Unquestionably it has more letters

* Of course it is quite a different thing when philologers, for their own special purposes, endeavour to construct an alphabet which shall cover all sounds of human speech, and shall enable them to communicate to one another in all parts of the world what is the true pronunciation, or what they believe to be true pronunciation, of the words with which they are dealing. But alphabets like these are purely scientific and must remain such. A single fact will sufficiently prove this. The *Standard Alphabet* of the German scholar Lepsius, intended, it is true, to furnish written equivalents for sounds, not of one human speech, but of all, has two hundred and eighty-six signs, every one of them expressing a distinct phonetic value.

than one to express one and the same sound; it has only one letter to express two or three sounds; it has sounds which are only capable of being expressed at all by awkward and roundabout expedients. Yet at the same time we must accept the fact, as we accept any other which it is out of our power to change—with regret, indeed, but with a perfect acquiescence: as one accepts the fact that Ireland is not some thirty or forty miles nearer to England—that it is so difficult to get round Cape Horn—that the climate of Africa is so fatal to European life. A people will no more quit their alphabet than they will quit their language; they will no more consent to modify the one *ab extra* than the other. Cæsar avowed that with all his power he could not introduce a new word, and certainly Claudius could not introduce a new letter. Centuries may bring about and sanction the introduction of a new one, or the dropping of an old. But to imagine that it is possible suddenly to introduce a group of ten new letters, as these reformers propose—they might just as feasibly propose that the English language should form its comparatives and superlatives on some entirely new scheme, say in Greek fashion, by the terminations 'oteros' and 'otatos;' or that we should agree to set up a dual; or that our substantives should return to our Anglo-Saxon declensions. Any one of these or like proposals would not betray a whit more ignorance of the eternal laws which regulate human speech, and of the limits within which deliberate action upon it

is possible, than does this of increasing our alphabet by ten entirely novel signs.

But grant it possible, grant our six and twenty letters to have so little sacredness in them that Englishmen would endure a crowd of upstart interlopers to mix themselves on an equal footing with them, still this could only arise from a sense of the greatness of the advantage to be derived from this introduction. Now the vast advantage claimed by the advocates of the system is, that it would facilitate the learning to read, and wholly save the labour of learning to spell, which 'on the present plan occupies,' as they assure us, 'at the very lowest calculation from three to five years.' Spelling, it is said, would no longer need to be learned at all; since whoever knew the sound, would necessarily know also the spelling, these being in all cases in perfect conformity with one another. The anticipation of this gain rests upon two assumptions which are tacitly taken for granted, but both of them erroneous.

The first of these assumptions is, that all men pronounce all words alike, and thus that whenever they come to spell a word, they will exactly agree as to what the outline of its sound is. Now we are sure men will not do this from the fact that, before there was any fixed and settled orthography in our language, when therefore everybody was more or less a phonographer, seeking to write down the word as it sounded *to him*, (for he had no other law to guide him,) the variations of spelling were infinite. Take for instance the

word 'sudden;' which does not seem to promise any great scope for variety. I have myself met with this word spelt in the following fifteen ways among our early writers: 'sodain,' 'sodaine,' 'sodan,' 'sodayne,' 'sodden,' 'sodein,' 'sodeine,' 'soden,' 'sodeyn,' 'suddain,' 'suddaine,' 'suddein,' 'suddeine,' 'sudden,' 'sudeyn.' Shakespeare's name is spelt I know not in how many ways, and Raleigh's no less. The same is evident from the spelling of uneducated persons in our own day. They have no other rule but the sound to guide them. How is it that they do not all spell alike; erroneously, it may be, as having only the sound for their guide, but still falling all into exactly the same errors? What is the actual fact? They not merely spell wrongly, which might be laid to the charge of our perverse system of spelling, but with an inexhaustible diversity of error, and that too in the case of simplest words. Thus the town of Woburn would seem to give small room for caprice in spelling, while yet the postmaster there has made, from the superscription of letters that have passed through his hands, a collection of two hundred and forty-four varieties of ways in which the place has been spelt.* It may be replied that these were all or nearly all collected from the letters of the ignorant and uneducated. Exactly so;—but it is for their sakes, and to place them on a level with the educated, or rather to accelerate their education by the omission of a useless

* *Notes and Queries*, No. 147.

yet troublesome discipline, that the change is proposed. I wish to show you that after the change they would be just as much, or almost as much, at a loss in their spelling as now.

Another reason would make it quite as necessary then to learn orthography as now. Pronunciation, as I have already noticed, is oftentimes far too subtle a thing to be more than approximated to, and indicated in the written letter. Different persons would attempt by different methods to overcome the difficulties which the reproduction of it for the eye presented, and thus different spellings would arise; or, if not so, one must be arbitrarily selected, and would have need to be learned, just as much as spelling at present has need to be learned. I will only ask you, in proof of this which I affirm, to turn to any Pronouncing Dictionary. That absurdest of all books, a Pronouncing Dictionary, may be of some service to you in this matter; it will certainly be of none in any other. When you mark the elaborate and yet ineffectual artifices by which it toils after the finer distinctions of articulation, seeks to reproduce in letters what exists, and can only exist, as the spoken tradition of pronunciation, acquired from lip to lip by the organ of the ear, capable of being learned, but incapable of being taught; or when you compare two of these Dictionaries with one another, and note the entirely different schemes and combinations of letters which they employ for representing the same sound to the eye; you will then perceive

how idle the attempt to make the written in language commensurate with the sounded; you will own that not merely out of human caprice, ignorance, or indolence, the former falls short of and differs from the latter; but that this lies in the necessity of things, in the fact that man's *voice* can effect so much more than ever his *letter* can.* You will then perceive that there would be as much, or nearly as much, of arbitrary in spelling which calls itself phonetic as there is in our present. We should be as little able to dismiss the spelling card then as now. But to what extent English writing would be transformed—whether for the better or the worse each may judge for himself—a single specimen will prove. There are four lines of Pope which hitherto we have thus spelt and read,

> 'But errs not nature from this gracious end,
> From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
> When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
> Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?'

Phonetically written, they would present themselves to us in the following fashion:

> 'Bnt ꝗ erz not nɛtiur from đis grɛcns end,
> from bnrniŋ snnz when livid deƀs disend,
> when erƀkwɛks swolɵ, or when tempests swip
> tonnz tn wnn grɛv, hɵl nɛconz tn đe dip.'

The scheme would not then fulfil its promises. The gains which it vaunts, when we come to look closely at them, disappear. And now for the losses. There are in every language a vast

* See Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, Croker's edit. 1848, p. 233.

number of words, which the ear does not distinguish from one another, but which are at once distinguishable to the eye by the spelling. I will only instance a few which are the same parts of speech; thus 'sun' and 'son;' 'virge' ('virga,' now obsolete) and 'verge;' 'reign,' 'rain,' and 'rein;' 'hair' and 'hare;' 'plate' and 'plait;' 'moat' and 'mote;' 'pear' and 'pair;' 'pain' and 'pane;' 'raise' and 'raze;' 'air' and 'heir;' 'ark' and 'arc;' 'mite' and 'might;' 'pour' and 'pore;' 'tail' and 'tale;' 'veil' and 'vale;' 'knight' and 'night;' 'knave' and 'nave;' 'pier' and 'peer;' 'rite' and 'right;' 'site' and 'sight;' 'aisle' and 'isle;' 'concent' and 'consent;' 'signet' and 'cygnet.' Now, of course, it is a real disadvantage, and may be the cause of serious confusion, that there should be words in spoken language of entirely different origin and meaning, which yet cannot in sound be differenced from one another. The phonographers simply propose to extend this disadvantage already cleaving to our spoken language, to the written language as well. It is fault enough in the French language, that 'mêre' a mother, 'mer' the sea, 'maire' a mayor of a town, should have no perceptible difference between them in the spoken tongue; or again that in some there should be nothing to distinguish 'sans,' 'sang,' 'sent,' 'sens,' 's'en,' 'cent;' nor yet between 'ver,' 'vert,' 'verre' and 'vers.' Surely it is not very wise to propose gratuitously to extend the same fault to the written language as well.

This loss in so many instances of the power to discriminate between words, which, however liable to confusion now in our spoken language, are liable to none in our written, would be serious enough; but more serious still would be the loss which would constantly ensue, of all which visibly connects a word with the past, which tells its history, and indicates the quarter from which it has been derived. In how many English words a letter silent to the ear, is yet most eloquent to the eye—the 'g' for instance in 'deign,' 'feign,' 'reign,' 'impugn,' telling as it does of 'dignor,' 'fingo,' 'regno,' 'impugno;' even as the 'b' in 'debt, 'doubt,' is not idle, but tells of 'debitum' and 'dubium.'

At present it is the written word which in all languages is their conservative element. In it is the abiding witness against the mutilations or other capricious changes in shape which affectation, folly, laziness, ignorance, and half-knowledge would introduce. Not seldom it proves unable to hinder the final adoption of these corrupter forms, but it does not fail to oppose to them a constant, and often a successful, resistance. With the adoption of phonetic spelling, this witness would exist no longer. Whatever was spoken would have also to be written, were it never so barbarous, never so wide a departure from the true form of the word. Nor is it merely probable that such a barbarizing process, such an adopting and sanctioning of a vulgarism, might take place, but among phonographers it has taken place already.

There is a vulgar pronunciation of the word 'Eu*rope*,' as though it were 'Eu*rup*.' Now it is quite possible that a larger number of persons in England may pronounce the word in this manner than in the right; and therefore the phonographers are only true to their principles when they spell it 'Eurup,' or, indeed, omitting the first letter 'Urup,'* the life of the first syllable being assailed no less than that of the second. What are the consequences? First, all connection with the old mythology is entirely broken off; secondly, its most probable etymology from two Greek words, signifying 'broad' and 'face,'—Europe being so called from the *broad* line or *face* of coast which it presented to the Asiatic Greek,—is totally obscured. But so far from the spelling servilely following the pronunciation, I should be bold to affirm that if ninety-nine out of every hundred persons in England chose to call Europe 'Urup,' this would be a vulgarism still, against which the written word ought to maintain its protest, not lowering itself to their level, but rather seeking to elevate them to its own.†

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* A chief phonographer writes to me to deny that this is the present spelling (1856) of 'Europe.' It was so when this paragraph was written.

† Quintilian has expressed himself with the true dignity of a scholar on this matter (*Inst.* 1. 6. 45): Consuetudinum sermonis vocabo *consensum eruditorum*; sicut vivendi consensum bonorum. —How different from innovations like this the changes in German spelling which J. Grimm, so far as his own example may reach, *has* introduced; and the still bolder which in the *Preface* to his *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, pp. liv.—lxii., he avows his desire

Then too, if there is much in orthography which is unsettled now, how much more would be unsettled then. Inasmuch as the pronunciation of words is continually altering, their spelling would of course have continually to alter too. What I here assert, namely that pronunciation is undergoing constant changes, although changes for the most part unmarked, or marked only by a few, it would be abundantly easy to prove. Take a *Pronouncing Dictionary* of fifty or a hundred years ago; in almost every page, you will observe schemes of pronunciation there recommended, which are now merely vulgarisms, or which have been dropped altogether. We gather from a discussion in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*,* that in his time 'great' was by some of the best speakers of the language pronounced 'gr*ee*t,' not 'gr*a*te:' Pope usually rhymes it with 'cheat,' 'complete,' and the like; thus in the *Dunciad:*

> 'Here swells the shelf with Ogilby the *great*,
> There, stamped with arms, Newcastle shines com*plete*;'

while Spenser's constant use a century and a half earlier, leaves no doubt that such was the invari-

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to see introduced;—as the employment of *f*, not merely where at present used, but wherever *v* is now employed; the substituting of the *v*, which would be thus disengaged, for *w*, and the entire dismissal of *w*. These may be advisable, or they may not; it is not for strangers to offer an opinion; but at any rate they all rest on a deep historic study of the language, and of its true genius; and are not a seeking to give permanent authority to the fleeting accidents of the present hour.

* Croker's edit. 1848, pp. 57, 61, 233.

able pronunciation of his time. Again, Pope rhymes 'obliged' with 'besieged;' and it has only ceased to be 'obl*ee*ged' almost in our own time. Who now drinks a cup of 'tay'? yet it is certain that this was the fashionable pronunciation in the first half of the last century. This couplet of Pope's is one proof out of many:

> 'Here thou, great Anna, whom three realms *obey*,
> Dost sometimes counsel take, and sometimes *tea*.'

Rhyme is a great detector of changes like these, which but for the help that it affords we should fail to detect, which indeed we should often have no means of detecting, which not seldom we should not suspect in the least. Thus how little our words ending in 'ough' are pronounced now as they were once we may gather from the fact that Golding in his translation of *Ovid's Metamorphoses* rhymes 'tough' and 'through,' 'trough' and 'through,' 'rough' and 'plough.' Or a play on words may do the same. Thus there would be no point in the complaint of Cassius that in all *Rome* there was *room* but for a single man,

> 'Now is it *Rome* indeed, and *room* enough,'

if Rome had not been pronounced in Shakespeare's time, as some few pronounce it still, as I believe John Kemble pronounced it to the last, but as the educated classes of society have now consented not to pronounce it any more. Samuel Rogers assures us that in his youth 'everybody said "Lonnon" not "London;" that Fox said "Lonnon" to the last.'

Swift long ago urged the same objection against the phonographers of his time: 'Another cause which has contributed not a little to the maiming of our language, is a foolish opinion advanced of late years that we ought to spell exactly as we speak: which, besides the obvious inconvenience of utterly destroying our etymology, would be a thing we should never see an end of. Not only the several towns and counties of England have a different way of pronouncing, but even here in London they clip their words after one manner about the court, another in the city, and a third in the suburbs; and in a few years, it is probable, will all differ from themselves, as fancy or fashion shall direct; all which, reduced to writing, would entirely confound orthography.' *

Let this much suffice by way of answer to those who would fain revolutionize our English orthography altogether. Dismissing them and their rash innovations, let me call your attention now to those changes in spelling which are constantly going forward, at some periods more rapidly than at others, but which never wholly cease; while at the same time I endeavour to trace, where this is possible, the motives and inducements which bring them about. It is a subject which none can neglect, who desire to obtain an accurate acquaintance with their native tongue. Some principles

* *A proposal for correcting, improving and ascertaining the English Tongue*, 1711, Works, vol. ix. pp. 139–159.

have been laid down in the course of what has been said already, that may help us to judge whether these changes are for better or for worse. We shall find, if I mistake not, of both kinds.

There are alterations in spelling which are for the worse. Thus an altered spelling will sometimes obscure the origin of a word, concealing it from those who would else at once have known whence and what it was, and would have found both pleasure and profit in this knowledge. In all those cases where the earlier spelling revealed the secret of the word, told its history, which the latter defaces or obscures, the change has been injurious, and is to be regretted; while yet, where this is thoroughly established, any attempt to undo it would be absurd. Thus, when 'grocer' was spelt 'gro*s*ser,' it was comparatively easy to see that he first had his name, because he sold his wares not by retail, but in the *gross*. 'Co*x*comb' tells us nothing now; but it did when spelt 'co*cks*comb,' the *comb* of a *cock* being an ensign or token which the fool was accustomed to wear. In 'grogra*m*' we are entirely to seek for the derivation; but in 'grogra*n*' or 'grogra*in*,' as earlier it was spelt, one could scarcely miss 'gros-grain,' the stuff of a *coarse grain* or woof. How many now understand 'woodbin*e*'? but who could help understanding 'woodbin*d*' (Ben Jonson)? What a mischievous alteration in spelling is 'd*i*vest' instead of 'd*e*vest.' The change here is so recent that surely it would not be impossible to return to the only intelligible spelling.

'P*i*gmy' used once to be spelt 'p*y*gmy,' and no Greek scholar could then fail to perceive that by 'pigmies' were indicated manikins of no greater height than that of a man's arm from the elbow to the closed *fist*.* Now he may know this in other ways; but the word itself tells him nothing. Or again, the old spelling, 'diam*ant*,' was preferable to the modern 'diam*ond*.' It was so, because it told more of the past history of the word. 'Diamant' and 'adamant' are in fact no more than different adoptions by the English tongue, of one and the same Greek, which afterwards became a Latin, word. The primary meaning of 'adamant' is, as you are aware, the indomitable, and it was a name given at first to steel as the hardest of metals; but afterwards transferred † to the most precious among all the precious stones, as that which in power of resistance surpassed everything besides.

Neither are new spellings to be commended, which obliterate or obscure the relationship of a word with others to which it is really allied; separating from one another, for those not thoroughly

* Pygmæi, quasi *cubitales* (Augustine).

† First so used by Theophrastus in Greek, and by Pliny in Latin.—The real identity of the two words explains Milton's use of 'diamond' in *Paradise Lost*, b. 6; and also in that sublime passage in his *Apology for Smectymnuus*: 'Then zeal, whose substance is ethereal, arming in complete *diamond* ascends his fiery chariot.'—Diez (*Wörterbuch d. Roman. Sprachen*, p. 123) supposes, not very probably, that it was under a certain influence of '*dia*fano,' the translucent, that 'adamante' was in the Italian, from whence we have derived the word, changed into '*dia*mante.'

acquainted with the subject, words of the same family. Thus when '*j*aw' was spelt '*c*haw,' no one could miss its connection with the verb 'to chew.' Now probably ninety-nine out of a hundred are unaware of any relationship between them. It is the same with 'cousin' (consanguineus), and 'to cozen.' I do say which of these should conform to the spelling of the other. The spelling of both was irregular from the first; while yet it was then better than now, when a permanent distinction has established itself between them, keeping out of sight that 'to cozen' is in all likelihood to deceive under show of affinity; which if it be so, Shakespeare's words,

> '*Cousins* indeed, and by their uncle *cozened*
> Of comfort,'*

will contain not a pun, but an etymology. The real relation between 'bliss' and 'to bless' is in like manner at present obscured.

The omission of a letter, or the addition of a letter, may each effectually work to keep out of sight the true character and origin of a word. Thus the omission of a letter. When for 'bran-new,' it was 'bran*d*-new' with a final 'd,' how vigorous was the image here. The 'brand' is the fire, and 'brand-new,' equivalent to 'fire-new' (Shakespeare), is that which is fresh and bright, as being newly come from the forge and fire. As now spelt, it conveys to us no image at all. Again, you have the word 'scrip'—as a 'scrip' of

* *Richard III.* Act iv. Sc. 4.

paper, government 'scrip.' Is this the Saxon 'scrip,' a wallet, which has in some strange manner obtained these meanings so different and so remote? Have we here only two different applications of one and the same word, or two homonyms, wholly different words, though spelt alike? It is sufficient to note how the first of these 'scrips' used to be written, namely with a final 't,' not 'scrip' but 'script,' and the question is answered. This 'scrip' is a Latin, as the other is an Anglo-Saxon, word, and meant at first simply a *written* (scripta) piece of paper—a circumstance which since the omission of the final 't' may easily escape our knowledge. 'Afraid' was spelt much better in old times with the double 'ff,' than with the single 'f' as now. It was then clear that it was not another form of 'afeared,' but wholly separate from it, the participle of the verb 'to affray,' 'affrayer,' or, as it is now written, 'effrayer.'

In these cases it has been the omission of a letter which has clouded and concealed the etymology. The intrusion of a letter sometimes does the same. Thus in the early editions of *Paradise Lost*, and in the writings of that age, you will find 'scent,' an odour, spelt 'sent.' It was better so; there is no other noun substantive 'sent,' with which it is in danger of being confounded; while its relation with 'sentio,' with 're*sent*,'* 'dis*sent*,'

* How close this relationship was once, not merely in respect of etymology, but also of significance, a passage like this will

'con*sent*,' and the like, is put out of sight by its novel spelling; the intrusive 'c' serving only to mislead. The same thing was attempted with 'site,' 'situate,' 'situation,' spelt for a time by many, 'scite,' 'scituate,' 'scituation;' but it did not continue with these. Again, 'whole,' in Wiclif's Bible, and indeed much later, sometimes as far down as Spenser, is spelt 'hole,' without the 'w' at the beginning. The present orthography may have the advantage of at once distinguishing the word to the eye from any other; but at the same time the initial 'w' hides its relation to the verb 'to heal.' The 'whole' man is he whose hurt is 'healed' or covered (we say of the convalescent that he 'recovers'); 'whole' being closely allied to 'hale' (integer), from which also by its modern spelling it is divided. 'Wholesome' has naturally followed the fortunes of 'whole;' it was spelt 'holsome' once.

Of 'island' too our present spelling is inferior to the old, inasmuch as it suggests a hybrid formation, as though the word were made up of the Latin 'insula,' and the Saxon 'land.' It is quite true that 'isle' *is* in relation with, and descent from, 'insula,' 'isola,' 'île;' and hence probably the misspelling of 'island.' This last however has nothing to do with 'insula,' being identical with

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prove: 'Perchance, as vultures are said to smell the earthiness of a dying corpse; so this bird of prey [the evil spirit which, according to Fuller, personated Samuel, 1 Sam. xxviii. 14] *resented* a worse than earthly savor in the soul of Saul, as evidence of his death at hand' (Fuller, *The Profane State*, b. 5. c. 4).

the German 'eiland,' the Anglo-Saxon 'ealand,' and signifying either the land apart* or land girt round with the sea. And it is worthy of note that this 's' is quite of modern introduction. In the earlier Versions of the Scriptures, and in the Authorized Version as first set forth, it is 'iland;' which is not accidental, seeing that 'isle' has the 's,' which 'iland' has not (see Rev. i. 9); and the spelling so continued far down into the seventeenth century.

One of the most frequent causes of alteration in the spelling of a word is a wrongly assumed derivation; as has been the case with the word which we dealt with. It is then sought to bring the word into harmony with, and to make it by its spelling suggest, this derivation, which has been erroneously thrust upon it. Here is a subject which, followed out as it deserves, would form an interesting and instructive chapter in the history of language. Very remarkable is the evidence which we have here to the way in which learned and unlearned alike crave to have a meaning in the words which they employ, to have these not body only, but body and soul. Where for the popular sense the life has died out from a word, men will put into it a life of their own devising, rather than that it should henceforth be a mere dead and inert sign for them. Much more will they be tempted to this in the case of foreign words, which have been adopted into the language, but

* 'Eiland' for 'einlant,' see Grimm's *Wörterbuch*, s. v.

which have not brought with them, at least for the popular mind, the secret of their origin. These shall tell something about themselves; and when they cannot tell what is true, or when that true is not intelligible any more, then, rather than that they should say nothing, men compel them to suggest what is false, moulding and shaping them into some new form, until at least they shall appear to do this.*

There is probably no language in which such a process has not been going forward; in which it is not the explanation, in a vast number of instances, of changes in spelling and even in form, which words have undergone. I will offer a few examples of it from foreign tongues, before adducing any from our own. 'Pyramid' is a word, whose spelling was affected in the Greek by an erroneous assumption of its derivation; the consequences of this error surviving to the present day. It is spelt by us with a 'y' in the first syllable, as it was spelt with the corresponding letter in the Greek. But why was this? It was because the Greeks assumed that the pyramids were so named from their having the appearance of *flame* going up into a point,† and so they spelt 'pyramid,' that they might find πῦρ or 'pyre' in it; while in fact 'pyramid' has nothing to do with flame or fire at all; being, as those best

* Diez looks with much favour on this process, and calls it, ein sinnreiches mittel fremdlinge ganz heimisch zu machen. Compare Schleicher, *Der Deutsche Sprache*, pp. 114–117.

† Ammianus Marcellinus, xxii. 15, 28.

qualified to speak on the matter declare to us, an Egyptian word of quite a different signification, and the Coptic letters being much better represented by the diphthong 'ei' than by the letter 'y,' as no doubt, but for this mistaken notion of what the word was intended to mean, they would have been.

Once more—the form 'Hierosolyma,' the Greek reproduction of the Hebrew 'Jerusalem,' was intended in all probability to express that the city so called was the *sacred* city of the *Solymi.** At all events the intention not merely of reproducing the Hebrew word, but also of making it significant in Greek, of finding ἱερόν in it, is plainly discernible. For indeed the Greeks were exceedingly intolerant of foreign words, till these had laid aside their foreign appearance,—intolerant of all words which they could not quicken with a Greek soul; and, with a very characteristic vanity and an ignoring of all other tongues but their own, assumed with no apparent misgivings that all words, from whatever quarter derived, were to be explained by Greek etymologies.†

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* Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 2.

† Let me illustrate this by further instances in a note. Thus βούτυρον, from which, through the Latin, our 'butter' has reached us, is borrowed (Pliny, *H. N.* xxviii. 9) from a Scythian word, now to us unknown: yet it is sufficiently plain that the Greeks so shaped and spelt it as to contain apparent allusion to *cow* and *cheese;* there is in βούτυρον an evident feeling after βοῦς and τυρόν. Bozra, meaning citadel in Hebrew and Phœnician, and the name, no doubt, which the citadel of Carthage bore, becomes Βύρσα on Greek lips; and then the well known legend of

'Tartar' is another word, of which it is at least possible that a wrongly assumed derivation has modified the spelling, and not the spelling only, but the very shape in which we now possess it. To many among us it may be known that the people designated by this appellation are not properly 'Tartars,' but 'Tatars;' and you may sometimes have noted the omission of the 'r' on the part of some who are curious in their spelling. How then, it may be asked, did the form 'Tartar' arise? When the terrible hordes of middle Asia

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the ox-hide was invented upon the name; not having suggested, but being itself suggested by it. Herodian (v. 6) reproduces the name of the Syrian goddess Astarte in a shape significant for Greek ears—'Αστροάρχη, The Star-ruler or Star-queen. When the apostate hellenizing Jews assumed Greek names, 'Eliakim' or 'Whom God has set,' became 'Alcimus' (ἄλκιμος) or The Strong (1 Macc. vii. 5). Latin examples in like kind are 'com*i*ssatio,' spelt continually 'com*e*ssatio,' and 'com*e*ssation' by those who sought to naturalize it in England, as though connected with 'cŏmedo,' to eat, being indeed the substantive from the verb 'cōmissari' (= κωμάζειν), to revel; as Plutarch, whose Latin is in general not very accurate, long ago correctly observed, and 'orichalcum,' spelt often '*au*richalcum,' as though it were a composite metal of mingled *gold* and brass; being indeed the *mountain* brass (ὀρείχαλκος). The miracle play, which is 'mystère,' in French, whence our English 'mystery,' was originally written 'mistère,' being derived from 'ministère,' and having its name because the clergy, the *ministerium* or *ministri* Ecclesiæ, conducted it. This was forgotten, and it then became 'mystery,' as though so called because the mysteries of the faith were in it set out. The mole in German was 'moltwurf,' our English 'moldwarp,' once, one that cast up the mould; but 'molte' faded out of the language, and the word became, as it now is, 'maulwurf,' one that casts up with the 'maul' or mouth;—which indeed the creature does not do.

burst in upon civilized Europe in the thirteenth century, many beheld in the ravages of their innumerable cavalry a fulfilment of that prophetic word in the Revelation (chap. ix.) concerning the opening of the bottomless pit; and from this belief ensued the change of their name from 'Tatars' to 'Tartars,' which was thus put into closer relation with 'Tartarus' or hell, from whence their multitudes were supposed to have proceeded.*

Another good example in the same kind is the German word 'sündflut,' the Deluge, which is now so spelt as to signify a 'sinflood,' the plague or *flood* of waters brought on the world by the *sins* of mankind; and some of us may before this have admired the pregnant significance of the word. Yet the old High German word had originally no such intention; it was spelt 'sinfluot,' that is, the great flood; and as late as Luther, indeed in Luther's own translation of the Bible, is so spelt as to make plain that the notion of a '*sin*-flood' had not yet found its way into, as it had not affected the spelling of, the word.†

But to look nearer home for our examples:

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* We have here, in this bringing of the words by their supposed etymology together, the explanation of the fact that Spenser (*Fairy Queen*, i. 7, 44), Middleton (*Works*, vol. v. pp. 524, 528, 538), and others employ 'Tartary' as equivalent to 'Tartarus' or hell.

† For a full discussion of this matter and fixing of the period at which 'sinfluot' became 'sündflut,' see the *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* vol. ii. p. 613; and Delitzsch, *Genesis*, 2nd ed. vol. ii. p. 210.

'Ceiling' was always 'sealing,' that which seals or closes the roof, in our early English; but, as is easy to explain, cælum (ciel) made itself unconsciously felt, intruded into the word and changed the spelling to our present. The little raisins brought from Greece, which play so important a part in one of our national dishes, the Christmas plum-pudding, used to be called 'corinths;' and this name they bear in mercantile lists of a hundred years ago: either that for the most part they were shipped from Corinth, the principal commercial city in Greece, or because they grew in large abundance in the immediate district round about it. Their likeness in shape and size and general appearance to our own currants, working together with the ignorance of the great majority of English people about any such place as Corinth, soon transformed 'corinths' into 'currants,' the name which now with a certain unfitness they bear; being not currants at all, but dried grapes, though grapes of diminutive size.

'*Court*-cards,' that is, the king, queen, and knave in each suit, were once '*coat*-cards;'* having their name from the long splendid 'coat' with which they were arrayed. Probably 'coat' after a while did not perfectly convey its original meaning and intention; being no more in common use for the long garment (the vestis talaris) reaching down to the heels; and then 'coat' was easily exchanged for 'court,' as the word is now both

* Ben Jonson, *The New Inn*, Act i. Sc. i.

spelt and pronounced, seeing that nowhere so fitly as in a Court should such splendidly arrayed personages be found. A public house in the neighbourhood of London having a few years since for its sign 'The George *Canning*' is already 'The George and *Cannon*,'—so rapidly do these transformations proceed, so soon is that forgotten which we suppose would never be forgotten. 'Welsh *rarebit*' becomes 'Welsh *rabbit*;' and '*farced*' or stuffed 'meat' becomes '*forced* meat.' Even the mere determination to make a word *look* English, to put it into an English shape, without thereby so much as seeming to attain any result in the way of etymology, is often sufficient to bring about a change in its spelling, and even in its form.* It is thus that 'sipahi' has become 'sepoy;' and only so could 'weissager' have taken its present form of 'wiseacre.'†

Not uncommonly a word, derived from one word, will receive a certain impulse and modification from another. This extends sometimes beyond

* 'Leghorn' is sometimes quoted as an example of this; but erroneously; for, as Admiral Smyth has shown (*The Mediterranean*, p. 409) 'Livorno' is itself rather the modern corruption, and 'Ligorno' the name found on the earlier charts.

† Exactly the same happens in other languages; thus, 'armbrust,' a crossbow, *looks* German enough, and yet has nothing to do with 'arm' or 'brust,' being a contraction of 'arcubalista,' but a contraction under these influences. As little has 'abenteuer' anything to do with 'abend' or 'theuer,' however it may seem to be connected with them, being indeed the Provencal 'adventura.' And 'weissagen' in its earlier forms had nothing in common with 'sagen.' On this subject see Schleicher, *Die Deutsche Sprache*, p. 116.

the spelling, and where it does so, would hardly belong to our present theme. Still I may notice an instance or two. Thus our 'obsequies' is the Latin 'exequiæ,' but formed under a certain impulse of 'obsequium,' and seeking to express and include the observant honour implied in that word. 'To refuse' is 'recusare,' while yet it has derived the 'f' of its second syllable from 'refutare;' it is a medley of the two. The French 'rame,' an oar, is 'remus,' but that modified by an unconscious recollection of 'ramus.' The Italian 'convitare' is the Latin 'invitare' but with 'convivium' making itself felt in the first syllable. 'Orange' is a Persian word, which has reached us through the Arabic, and which the Spanish 'naranja' more nearly represents than the form existing in other languages of Europe. But what so natural as to contemplate the orange as the *golden* fruit, especially when the '*aurea* mala' of the Hesperides were familiar to all antiquity? In this way 'aurum,' 'oro,' 'or,' made themselves felt in the shapes which the word took in most of the languages of the West, and we have here the explanation of the change in the first syllable, as in the low Latin 'aurantium,' 'orangia,' in the French 'orange,' and in our own.*

It is foreign words, or words adopted from foreign languages, as already has been said, which are especially subjected to such transformations as these. The soul which they once had in their

* See Mahn, *Etym. Untersuch.* p. 157.

own language, having, for as many as do not know that language, departed from them, men will not rest till they have put another soul into them again. Thus—to take first one or two popular and familiar instances, than which none serve better to illustrate the laws which preside over human speech,—the Bellerophon becomes for our sailors the 'Billy Ruffian,' for what can they know of the Greek mythology, or of the slayer of Chimæra? an iron steamer, the Hirondelle, which plied on the Tyne, was the 'Iron Devil.' '*Contre*danse,' or dance in which the parties stand *face to face* with one another, and which ought to have appeared in English as '*counter* dance,' becomes '*country* dance,'* as though it were the dance of the country folk and rural districts, as distinguished from the quadrille and waltz and more artificial dances of the town.†

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* On this word De Quincey (*Life and Manners*, p. 70, American Ed.) says well: 'It is in fact by such corruptions, by off-sets upon an old stock, arising through ignorance or mispronunciation originally, that every language is frequently enriched; and new modifications of thought, unfolding themselves in the progress of society, generate for themselves concurrently appropriate expressions. . . . It must not be allowed to weigh against a word once fairly naturalized by all, that originally it crept in upon an abuse or a corruption. Prescription is as strong a ground of legitimation in a case of this nature, as it is in law. And the old axiom is applicable—Fieri non debuit, factum valet. Were it otherwise, languages would be robbed of much of their wealth.'

† Unless indeed according to the rights of the case it should prove the exact converse of this, and the French 'contredanse' be derived from our country dance: see Chappell's argument to

A well known rose, the rose of the four seasons, or 'rose des quatre saisons,' becomes on the lips of our gardeners, the 'rose of the *quarter sessions*,' though here the eye has misled, rather than the ear. The cherry of Médoc becomes presently a 'may-duke.' 'Dent de lion' (it is spelt 'dentdelyon' in our early writers) becomes 'dandelion,' '*chaude* melée,' or an affray in *hot* blood, '*chance*medley,' 'causey' (chaussée) becomes 'causeway,' 'rachitis' 'rickets,' 'mandragora' in French 'main de gloire,' and in Dutch 'hammock' (a native Indian word) 'hangmat.'

'Necromancy' for a long time was erroneously spelt, under the influence of an erroneous derivation; which, perhaps even now, has left traces behind it in our popular phrase, 'the *Black* Art.' Prophecy by aid of the dead as I need not tell you is the proper meaning of the word, which rests on a presumed power of raising these by potent spells, and compelling them to give answers about things to come. Of such 'necromancy' we have a very awful example in the story of the witch of Endor, and a very horrid one in Lucan.* But the Latin medieval writers, whose Greek was either little or none, spelt the word, '*nigro*mantia,'

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prove this in his *Popular Music*, vol. ii. p. 627, with his reference to the *Encyclopedie Méthodique* of 1791. It need hardly be observed that whether we derived from the French, or the French from us, the illustration of the matter in hand remains equally good.

* *Phars.* vi. 720—830.

while at the same time getting round to the original meaning, though by a wrong process, they understood the dead by these 'nigri,' or blacks, whom they had brought into the word.* Down to a late day we find, '*negro*mancer' and '*negro*-mancy' frequent in English.

'Pleurisy' used often to be spelt (it is hardly so now), without an 'e' in the first syllable, evidently on the tacit assumption that it was from *plus pluris*. When Shakespeare falls into an error, he 'makes the offence gracious;' yet, I think, he would scarcely have written,

> 'For goodness growing to a *plurisy*
> Dies of his own *too much*,'

but that *he* too derived 'plurisy' from *pluris*. This, even with the 'small Latin and less Greek,' which Ben Jonson allows him, he scarcely would have done, had the word presented itself in that form, which by right of its descent from πλευρά (being a pain, stitch, or sickness *in the side*) it ought to have possessed. Those who for 'crucible' wrote 'chrysoble' (Jeremy Taylor does so,) must evidently have assumed that the Greek for *gold*, and not the Latin for *cross*, lay at the foundation of the word. 'Anthymn' instead of 'anthem' (Barrow so spells it), rests plainly on a wrong etymology, even as this spelling clearly betrays what that wrong etymology is. 'Lanthorn' (Fuller) for 'lantern,' does not less clearly do the same.

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* Thus in a *Vocabulary*, 1475: Nigromansia dicitur divinatio facta *per nigros*.

'Rhyme' with a 'y' is a modern misspelling; and would never have been but for the undue influence which the Greek 'rhythm' has exercised upon it. Spenser and his contemporaries spelt it 'rime.' 'Abominable' was not unfrequently in the seventeenth century spelt 'ab*h*ominable,' as though it were that which departed from the human (*ab homine*) into the bestial or devilish.

In all these instances but one the correct spelling has in the end resumed its sway. Not so however 'frontisp*ie*ce,' which ought to be spelt 'frontisp*i*ce,' (it was so by Milton and others,) being the low Latin 'frontispicium,' from 'frons' and 'aspicio,' the forefront of the building, that side which presents itself to the view. The entirely ungrounded notion that 'piece' constitutes the last syllable, has given rise to our present orthography.*

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* As 'orthography' itself means '*right* spelling,' it might be a curious question whether it is permissible to speak of an *incorrect orth*ography, that is, of a *wrong right*-spelling. The question which would be thus started is one of frequent recurrence, and it is worthy of note how often this *contradictio in adjecto* is found to occur. Thus the Greeks, having no convenient word for rider, apart from rider *on a horse*, did not scruple to speak of the *horse*man (ἱππεύς) upon an *elephant*. They are often as inaccurate and with no necessity; as in using ἀνδριάς of the statue of a *woman;* where εἰκών or ἄγαλμα would have served as well. So too their table (τράπεζα = τετράπεζα) involved probably the *four* feet which commonly support one; yet they did not shrink from speaking of a *three*-footed table (τρίπους τράπεζα), in other words, a '*three*-footed *four*-footed;' much as though we should speak of a '*three* footed *quadru*ped.' Homer's 'hecatomb' is not of a *hundred*, but of twelve, oxen; and elsewhere of Hebe he says, in words not reproducible in English,

You may, perhaps, wonder that I have dwelt so long on these details of spelling; that I have bestowed on them so much of my own attention, that I have claimed for them so much of yours; yet in truth I cannot regard them as unworthy of our very closest heed. For indeed of how much beyond itself is accurate or inaccurate spelling the certain indication. Thus when we meet '*sy*ren,' for '*si*ren,' as so strangely often we do, almost always in newspapers, and often where we should hardly have expected (I met it lately in the *Quarterly Review*, and again in Gifford's *Massinger*), how difficult it is not to be 'judges of evil thoughts,' and to take

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νέκταρ ἐωνοχόει. So too his ἰκτιδέη κυνέη, a helmet of weasel skin, but more strictly a weaselskin dogskin, contains a like contradiction. Ἄκρατος, the unmingled, had so come to stand for wine, that St. John speaks of ἄκρατος κεκερασμένος (Rev. xiv. 10), or the unmingled mingled. Boxes to hold precious ointments were so commonly of alabaster, that they bore this name whether they were so or not; and Theocritus celebrates '*golden* alabasters;' as one might now speak of a 'silver pyx,' that is a silver *box*-wood, or of an iron box. Cicero has no choice but to call a water-clock a *water sun*dial (solarium ex aquâ); Columella speaks of a '*vintage* of honey' (vindemia mellis), and Horace invites his friend to im*pede*, not his *foot*, but his head, with myrtle (*caput* im*ped*ire myrto). A German who should desire to tell of the golden shoes with which the folly of Caligula adorned his horse, could scarcely avoid speaking of *golden* hoof-*irons*. Ink in some German dialects is 'blak,' but red ink is 'rood blak,' or red black. The same inner contradiction is involved in such language as our own, a '*false ver*dict,' a '*steel cuirass*' ('coriacea' from corium, leather), '*antics new*' (Harrington's *Ariosto*), 'looking-*glasses* of *brass*' (Exod. xxxviii. 8), a '*sweet sauce*' (salsa), 'a *steel pen*' (penna), an '*erroneous etym*ology,' '*rather late*,' 'rather' being the comparative of 'rathe;' and in others.

this slovenly misspelling as the specimen and evidence of an inaccuracy and ignorance which reaches very far wider than the single word which is before us. But why is it that so much significance is ascribed to a wrong spelling? Because ignorance of a word's spelling at once argues ignorance of its origin and derivation. I do not mean that one who spells rightly may not be ignorant of it too, but he who spells wrongly is certainly so. We are quite sure that he who for '*si*ren' writes '*sy*ren,' knows nothing of the magic knots and entanglements (σειραί) of song, by which those fair enchantresses were supposed to draw those that heard them to their ruin; and from which they most probably had their name.

Correct or incorrect orthography being, then, this note of accurate or inaccurate knowledge, we may confidently conclude where two spellings of a word exist, and are both employed by persons who generally write with precision, that there must be something to account for this. It will be worth your while to inquire into the causes which enable both spellings to hold their ground and to find their supporters, not ascribing either one or the other to mere carelessness or error. You will commonly find that two spellings exist, because two views of the word's origin exist, which those two spellings severally express. The question therefore which way of spelling should continue, and wholly supersede the other, and which, so long as both are allowed, we should ourselves employ, can only be settled by determining which of

these etymologies deserves the preference. It is thus with 'ch*y*mist' and 'ch*e*mist,' neither of which has obtained in our common use a complete ascendancy over the other. It is not here, that one mode is certainly right, the other as certainly wrong: but they severally represent two different etymologies of the word, and each is correct according to its own. When we spell 'ch*y*mist' and 'ch*y*mistry,' we implicitly affirm the words to be derived from the Greek χυμός, sap; and the chymic art will then have occupied itself first with distilling the juice and sap of plants, and will from this have drawn its name. Many however object to this, that it was not with the distillation of herbs, but with the amalgamation of metals, that chemistry occupied itself at the first, and find in the word a reference to Egypt, the land of Ham or 'Cham,'* in which this art was first practised with success. In this case 'ch*e*mist' and not 'ch*y*mist' would be the only correct spelling.

Of how much confusion the spelling which used to be so common, 'satyr' for 'satire,' is at once the consequence, the expression, and again the cause. Not indeed that this confusion first began with us;† 'sat*y*ricus' in the Latin was no less

* Χημία, the name of Egypt; see Plutarch, *De Is. et Os.* c. 33. For reasons against this, the favourite etymology at present, see Mahn, *Etymol. Untersuch.* p. 81.

† We have a notable evidence how deeply rooted this error was, of the way in which it was shared by the learned as well as the unlearned, in Milton's *Apology for Smectymnuus*, sect. 7,

continually written for 'sat*i*ricus'; and this out of an assumed identity of the Roman *satire* and the Greek *satyric* drama; while in fact that was the only form of poetry which the Romans did *not* borrow from the Greeks. The Roman 'satira,' —I speak of things familiar to many of my hearers,—is properly a *full* dish (lanx being understood)—a dish heaped up with various ingredients, a 'farce,' or hodge-podge; the name being transferred from this to a form of poetry which at first admitted the utmost variety in the materials of which it was composed, and the shapes into which these materials were wrought up. Wholly different from this, having no one point of contact with it in form, history, or intention, is the 'satyric' drama of Greece, so called because Silenus and the 'satyrs' supplied the chorus; and in their naive selfishness, and mere animal instincts, held up before men a mirror of what they would be, if only the divine, which is also the truly human, element of humanity, were withdrawn; what man, all that properly constituted him man being withdrawn, would prove.

And then what light, as we have already seen, does the older spelling often cast upon a word's

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which everywhere presumes the identity of the 'satyr' and the 'satirist.' It was Isaac Casaubon who first effectually dissipated it even for the learned world. The results of his investigations were made popular by Dryden, in the very instructive *Discourse on Satirical Poetry*, prefixed to his translations from Juvenal; but the confusion still survives, and 'satyrs' and 'satires,' the Greek 'satyric' drama, the Latin 'satirical' poetry, are still assumed by many to have something to do with one another.

etymology; how often clear up the mystery, which would otherwise have hung about it, or which *had* hung about it till some one had noticed and turned to profit this its earlier spelling. Thus 'dirge' is always spelt 'dirige' in early English. Now this 'dirige' *may be* the first word in a Latin psalm or prayer once used at funerals; there is a reasonable likelihood that the explanation of 'dirge' is here; at any rate, if it is not here, it is nowhere. The derivation of 'midwife' is uncertain, and has been the subject of discussion; but when we find it spelt 'medewife' and 'meadwife,' in Wiclif's Bible, this leaves hardly a doubt that it is the *wife* or woman who acts for a *mead* or reward. In cases too where there was no mystery hanging about a word, how often does the early spelling make clear to all that which was before only known to those who had made the language their special study. Thus if an early edition of Spenser should come into your hands, or a modern one in which the early spelling is retained, what continual lessons in English might you derive from it. Thus 'nostril' is always spelt by him and his contemporaries 'nosethrill;' a little earlier it was 'nosethirle.' Now 'to thrill' is the same as to drill or pierce; it is plain then here at once that the word signifies the orifice or opening with which the *nose* is *thrilled*, drilled, or pierced. We might have read the word for ever in our modern spelling without being taught this. 'Ell' gives us no clue to its own meaning; but in 'eln,' used in Holland's translation of

Camden, we recognize 'ulna' at once. Again, the 'morris' or 'morrice-dance,' of which in our early poets we hear so much, as it is now spelt tells us nothing about itself; but read '*moriske* dance,' as Holland and his contemporaries spell it, and you will scarcely fail to perceive, that it was so called either because it was really, or was supposed to be, a dance in use among the *moriscoes* of Spain, and from Spain introduced into England.* Once more, we are told that our 'cray-fish,' or 'craw-fish,' is the French 'écrevisse.' This is quite true, but it is not self-evident. Trace it however through these successive spellings, 'krevys' (Lydgate), 'crevish' (Gascoigne), 'craifish' (Holland), and the chasm between 'cray-fish' or 'craw-fish' and 'écrevisse' is by aid of these three intermediate spellings bridged over at once; and in the fact of our Gothic 'fish' finding its way into this French vocable we see one example more of a law, which has been already abundantly illustrated in this lecture.†

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* 'I have seen him
Caper upright, like a wild *Mórisco*,
Shaking the bloody darts, as he his bells.'
Shakespeare, 2 *Henry VI.* Act iii. Sc. 1.

† In the reprinting of old books it is often hard to determine how far the earlier spelling of words should be retained, how far they should be conformed to present usage. It is comparatively easy to lay down as a rule that in books intended for popular use, wherever the form of the word is not affected by the modernizing of the spelling, there it shall take place; (who for example would wish our Bibles to be now printed letter for letter after the edition of 1611, or Shakespeare with the orthography of the first folio) but wherever the shape, outline, and

In other ways also an accurate taking note of the successive changes which words have undergone, will often throw light upon them. Thus we may know, others having assured us of the fact, that 'ant' and 'emmet' were originally only two different spellings of the same word; but we may be perplexed to understand how two forms, now so different, could ever have diverged from a single root. When however we find the different spellings, 'emmet,' 'emet,' 'amet,' 'amt,' 'ant,' the gulf which appeared to separate 'emmet' from 'ant' is bridged over at once, and we not merely accept on the assurance of others that these two

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character of the word have been affected by the changes which it has undergone, there the earlier form shall be held fast. The rule is a judicious one; but in practice it is not always easy to determine what affects the form and essence of a word, and what does not. About some words there can be no doubt; and therefore when a modern editor of Fuller's *Church History* complacently announces that he has changed 'dirige' into 'dirge,' 'barreter' into 'barrister,' 'synonymas' into 'synonymous'!, 'extempory' into 'extemporary,' 'scited' into 'situated,' 'van-currier' into 'avant-courier,' and the like, he at the same time informs us that for all purposes of the study of English (and few writers are for this more important than Fuller), his edition is worthless. Or again, when modern editors of Shakespeare print, and that, giving no intimation of the fact,

'Like quills upon the fretful *porcupine*,'

the word in his first folio and quarto standing,

'Like quills upon the fretful *porpentine*,'

and this being in Shakespeare's time the current form of the word, they have taken an unwarrantable liberty with his text; and no less, when they substitute 'Kenilworth' for 'Killingworth,' which was his, Marlowe's, and generally the earlier form of the name.

are identical, but we perceive clearly in what manner they are so.

Even before any close examination of the matter, it is hard not to suspect that 'runagate' is another form of 'renegade,' slightly transformed, as so many words, to put an English signification into its first syllable; and then the meaning gradually modified in obedience to the new derivation which was assumed to be its original and true one. Our suspicion of this is very greatly strengthened (for we see how very closely the words approach one another), by the fact that 'renega*de*' is constantly spelt 'renega*te*' in our old authors, while at the same time the denial of *faith*, which is now a necessary element in 'renegade,' and one differencing it inwardly from 'runagate,' is altogether wanting in early use—the denial of *country* and of the duties thereto owing being all that is implied in it. Thus it is constantly employed in Holland's *Livy* as a rendering of 'perfuga;'* while in the one passage where 'runagate' occurs in the Prayer Book Version of the Psalms (Ps. lxviii. 6), a reference to the original will show that the translators could only have employed it there on the ground that it also expressed rebel, revolter, and not runaway merely.

I might easily occupy your attention much longer, so little barren or unfruitful does this

* 'The Carthaginians shall restore and deliver back all the *renegates* [perfugas] and fugitives that have fled to their side from us.'—p. 751.

subject of spelling appear likely to prove; but all things must have an end; and as I concluded my first lecture with a remarkable testimony borne by an illustrious German scholar to the merits of our English tongue, I will conclude my last with the words of another, not indeed a German, but still of the great Germanic stock; words resuming in themselves much of which we have been speaking upon this and upon former occasions: 'As our bodies,' he says, 'have hidden resources and expedients, to remove the obstacles which the very art of the physician puts in its way, so language, ruled by an indomitable inward principle, triumphs in some degree over the folly of grammarians. Look at the English, polluted by Danish and Norman conquests, distorted in its genuine and noble features by old and recent endeavours to mould it after the French fashion, invaded by a hostile entrance of Greek and Latin words, threatening by increasing hosts to overwhelm the indigenous terms. In these long contests against the combined power of so many forcible enemies, the language, it is true, has lost some of its power of inversion in the structure of sentences, the means of denoting the difference of gender, and the nice distinctions by inflection and termination—almost every word is attacked by the spasm of the accent and the drawing of consonants to wrong positions; yet the old English principle is not overpowered. Trampled down by the ignoble feet of strangers, its springs still retain force enough to restore itself. It lives and plays through all the veins of the

language; it impregnates the innumerable strangers entering its dominions with its temper, and stains them with its colour, not unlike the Greek which in taking up oriental words, stripped them of their foreign costume, and bid them to appear as native Greeks.'*

* Halbertsma, quoted by Bosworth, *Origin of the English and Germanic Languages*, p. 39.

ADDENDUM TO NOTE, PAGE 196.

Elsewhere the same writer says (vol. ii. p. 150) 'Sauf l'usage des bons écrivains et de la société polie, sauf l'élaboration grammaticale (double avantage que je suis loin de vouloir atténuer), la langue littéraire n'est, non plus, qu'un patois ou dialecte élevé à la suprématie, et elle a, comme les autres, ses fautes et ses méprises.'

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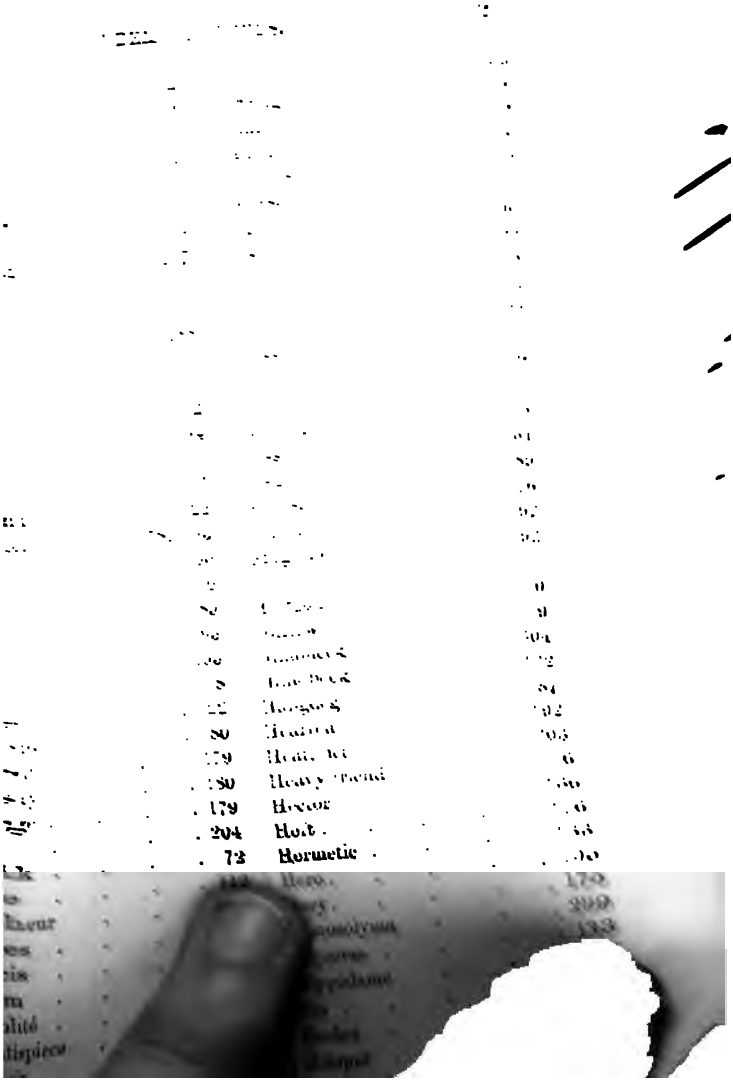

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